

LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

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*TAKEN BY SIEGE.**

CHAPTER VI.

BESSIE ARCHER was the only child of wealthy parents, and her one trouble in life was that she had no serious occupation. She had a much better mind than the average girl, and she was intelligent enough to be conscious of her own shortcomings. She wanted to be great, and she was only clever. Her father had taken unusual pains with her education, and the advantages that he would have given to a son were as far as possible given to her. She could translate Heine and De Musset very gracefully, and had put Horace into respectable English verse. Some of her Heine and De Musset translations she had set to music, and she sang them with a great deal of taste. But she tired of translating, and writing songs began to bore her. She wanted to do something of more consequence in the world. Having been born and brought up in luxury, she thought she would like to be a labor-reformer, and so she attended some noisy meetings at the Cooper Union, accompanied by her cousin Archie Tillinghast. Instead of being disillusionized thereby, she got up quite a sentimental feeling about the "horny-handed sons of toil." So regularly did she attend these meetings that she became known by sight to some of the professional agitators, and one of them made bold to call at her house and ask her for funds to carry on the good work. He was a smooth-tongued fellow, and he urged her to write a labor-reform pamphlet, which he engaged to print and send broadcast over the land,—if she would pay the expenses.

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But the labor-reformers palled upon her after a while, and she began to think deeply upon the subject of negro equality. She talked about it to every one who would argue or agree with her. She attended some meetings held to discuss the subject, and once invited the African orator home to dinner. She said that she had "no vulgar race-prejudices;" but her father had, and the dinner-party did not come off. Encouraged by her patronage, the orator told her one day that he had no vulgar race-prejudices either, and that he would as lief marry a white woman as a colored one. He advanced this belief with so much meaning that Miss Archer rang the bell and ordered the servant to put the orator out of the house. After that day she carefully avoided the subject of negro equality, and turned her attention to the amelioration of the condition of the Indian. This fancy pleased her longer than usual; but after she had made quite a collection of Indian trophies, and read a good deal, more particularly poems, of Indian literature, she went out to the Plains to visit a friend who had married an army officer. There she saw the Indian divested of romance. She thought him a very uninteresting personage, and preferred the legends of the poets to the facts that stared her in the face on the Plains.

At the time when Rush Hurlstone became acquainted with her she was deeply interested in esoteric Buddhism, and had attended some questionable meetings at the apartment of the high-priestess of Buddha, a certain Madame Parapoff, who drew around her a wholly Bohemian and partially vicious lot of people, mostly men, among whom she sat smoking cigarettes and discoursing of the strange things she had seen in India. She wore a brooch which she said had been plucked out of the forehead of a departed Hindoo and placed at her throat. Did any one doubt her? There was the brooch.

Madame Parapoff was a very clever woman, and had written a book entitled "The Rending of the Veil," which no one read, but which every one said was a wonderful production. It was in two large folio volumes, filled with illustrations, showing the veil before and after the rending, and giving the mystic signs known only to those who had sought faithfully for esoteric information on this subject.

Madame Parapoff, as I have said, was clever, but she had a face that would frighten off any one who was not particularly anxious to learn that which she alone professed to teach. Bessie Archer was never more alarmed in her life than on her first visit to Madame Parapoff's "bungalow," as the latter called it. She had never seen such a looking woman before: her face repelled her, but her manner was reassuring. The Russian was a thorough woman of the world, and she saw that in this visitor she had a fish of a new sort to deal with, who could not be caught

with the common bait thrown to the men around her. Only the choicest morsel would attract her. She must be careful not to offend her by speaking too plainly before her at first, and she must not give her her famous pamphlet, "Naked, and not Ashamed," to read until she was quite sure of her. Bessie had induced her useful cousin, Archie Tillinghast, to accompany her to Madame Parapoff's. Archie didn't want to go at all, but he was convinced that Bessie would go alone if he didn't go with her.

"Rum girl, Cousin Bess," he said to Rush; "bright as a dollar, but slippery as an eel; you never can tell where she is going to bob up. Beastly place, that Parapoff's. A lot of hairy men, smelling of whiskey and tobacco-smoke, lolling around the floor on skins, puffing their vile pipes in the face of the priestess, who sat on a sort of raised place in a big chair, and smoked cigarettes, partly in self-defence and partly to show her very white and well-kept hands and handsome rings. Hers were the only clean hands in the room. Such a lot of tramps! I don't believe they had a change of shirts among them."

"And did Miss Archer find pleasure in their society?" asked Rush.

"She tried to think she did. At any rate, she was doing something out of the common; and there is great satisfaction in that to some people, old boy," answered Archie. "I'm very fond of Bessie, otherwise you wouldn't find me trotting around to these tiresome places with her,—labor-reform meetings, negro-equality meetings, and Indian meetings. 'If you won't go with me, I'll go alone,' she says; and what's a fellow to do? Duty calls, and I obey."

This conversation took place at the Pow-Wow Club, where Archie and Rush were dining according to the promise given in a previous chapter. They had a good dinner and a pow-wow that did honor to the name of the club. As they sat over the walnuts and the wine, Archie took fifteen dollars from his pocket, and said, "Here is the rest of your money, old boy: I have deducted the five dollars. I struck old Penny-packer for twenty. Let's see what you've written."

Rush, a little embarrassed, tried to put off the evil moment.

"Nonsense, man!" said Archie. "Out with them. You know this is not supposed to be poetry. I'm not a critic: anything with a rhyme will do, so long as you get in the magic word *Damascene*."

So Rush pulled the papers out of his pocket, and puffed vigorously at his cigar with an assumed air of indifference. Archie spread the sheets out before him, cracked the soft-shelled almonds with one hand while he held the manuscript with the other, and read the following lines:

Like the blushes that paint the sunrise
Are the blushes on her cheek;
And the thrush's note in the woodland
I hear when she doth speak.
Like a feather that's lightly blowing
Is her white and tiny hand:
Ah, she's the fairest maiden
In all the broad green land.
But the sweetest charms she owneth
Are her hands so pearly white;
For she washes them with *Damascene*
Each morning and each night.

"Bravo! bravo!" he exclaimed. "You could not have done better if you'd been in training for a month. This is just the thing." And, hastily glancing over the others, "Ah, I see you've dropped a little humor into these. That's good; but it's the sentiment that fetches old Pennypacker. You've more than earned your money: so I hope your conscience is at ease."

Rush reassured him on this point by pocketing the money, and at the same time he told him that his prospects at *The Dawn* office were improving; but he didn't say where his assignment had taken him, for fear of betraying himself if he spoke upon a subject so near his heart.

"Now, Rush, my boy," said Archie, looking at his watch, "I don't like to appear rude, but you know I told you I had three receptions this evening. One is that of the Daughters of Sappho, who hold their annual reunion at Delmonico's; but that won't keep me long. I'll get a programme and flee. The other is at the house of the California millionaire, McMulligan, who owns a palace in Fifth Avenue; and that will not delay me either, for the genial McMulligan himself has promised me a printed list of his guests. Then we will fly to my uncle Archer's, where we are sure to have a pleasant evening."

So, donning their overcoats, the two set out.

They walked down to Delmonico's, then in Fourteenth Street, where the Daughters of Sappho were having a grand time. The meeting had been called to order when they arrived, and Mrs. Lavinia Hopper-Walker was beginning her essay on "The Weaker Sex," which she proved to their entire satisfaction to be the male.

"Who behaves the most calmly in times of emergency?" asked Mrs. Hopper-Walker,— "the woman or the man? I need hardly say it is the woman. The woman will endure suffering without flinching, while a man in the dentist's chair has been known to kick great holes in the wall while his teeth were being filled." (Applause.) "Who are seized with panic at a fire?—the men or the women? Statistics will prove to

you that half the trouble during a fire in a theatre or other public hall is invariably caused by the pushing and crowding of the men, who will stamp out the life of any one who gets in their way. If this is not proof that man is the weaker vessel, what is? To me it is sufficient." (Great applause.)

But Mrs. Hopper-Walker thought that the others needed further proof; for she continued to present them with statistical evidence for half an hour longer at least. In the mean time Archie found the president of the club, Mrs. Merrie May, who gave him a programme of the evening's exercises and a printed synopsis of the different speeches. While Archie was attending to his duties, Rush was looking about the room at the strange people ranged along the wall. A gentleman with a very high forehead and a blond beard that grew in irregular spots about his face wherever it could pierce the surface tapped him upon the shoulder after a while, and said,—

"I saw you at the office of *The Dawn* the other day, so I presume you are a reporter and would like some points for an article for your paper,—the names of the distinguished people here this evening, etc." And, before Rush could say that he was not there as a representative of his paper, the man ran his fingers through his straggling locks and, drawing himself up to his full five feet four inches and a half, said, "The lady reading the address is Mrs. Lavinia Hopper-Walker," adding, in a most impressive whisper, "my wife. I am Tobias T. Hopper-Walker. T. stands for Tartar. My mother was a Tartar."

Rush thought that his wife was a Tartar also, but he didn't say so.

"Mrs. Lavinia Hopper-Walker is a most remarkable woman, sir. She can take the floor against any man, and shut him up before he knows where he is."

Rush looked at Mrs. Hopper-Walker, who at this moment was making one of her most cutting remarks at the expense of man. Her eyes were fixed upon her husband, and the expression of superiority that passed over her face was a study for a tragedian. The expression on his face would better have served the comedian, it was so self-deprecatory and showed such satisfaction in being the weaker vessel.

"This is a most representative gathering," he whispered. "There is Mrs. Ann Amelia de Johnstone, president of the 'Women Who Dare Society.' It meets every week at her house in Williamsburg, where it enjoys a most intellectual evening."

Rush looked in the direction indicated by Mr. Hopper-Walker's long forefinger, and saw a woman with a high forehead decorated with thin, tight curls. Her eyes were large, and their prominence was exaggerated by the powerful glasses she wore on her very *retroussé* nose.

Indeed, her nose turned up with so much determination that it carried her upper lip with it, exposing her two large front teeth to public gaze.

"Mrs. Johnstone is very clever," continued Hopper-Walker. "She writes for the magazines and pamphlets by the score. I suppose you have read her book on the form of marriage-proposals among the ancient Egyptians? She holds that women proposed in those days, and advocates the olden custom. Mrs. Hopper-Walker has written an answer to this, in which she proves that the custom is even older than Mrs. De Johnstone claims, and that that lady's theories have been in actual practice in this country for years. It is a good custom for some women. I know a number who would not have been married if it had not prevailed." He cast a furtive glance in the direction of Mrs. Hopper-Walker, who was just taking her seat amidst the most enthusiastic applause.

At this moment Archie put his arm through Rush's and said it was time for them to be off. Rush thanked Mr. Hopper-Walker, and the two young men went down-stairs to the café and seated themselves at a small table. While they drank a jug of German seltzer, Archie wrote out his report of the Sappho and sent it down to *The Trumpet* office.

"There's nothing pleases them like getting copy in early, dear boy. Now let us hie to my uncle Archer's, where I will leave you while I do the McMulligan's. As I told you before, that won't delay me long. Cousin Bess will take care of you while I am interviewing McMulligan on the cost of his entertainment."

From Delmonico's they strolled up-town as far as Twentieth Street, where they turned off to the home of the Archers in Gramercy Park. The moon was shining brightly upon this exclusive little park, and upon the ladies in their handsome wraps who were running gayly up the Archers' front steps and disappearing in a blaze of gaslight through the door. This was to be Rush's introduction to New York society,—a thing he had heard a great deal about and regarded with more or less awe. He was just at an age when society is most attractive. He was very susceptible to beauty, and he considered Helen Knowlton the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. And so she certainly was, for she was the only beauty he had seen who was not of a more or less rustic type, and, notwithstanding his country bringing up, he had little taste for rusticity in women. This first appearance in the social world was a great excitement to him, and he was very much afraid that he would do something in violation of the proprieties. So he determined to do as his friend Tillinghast did; and he could not have had a better guide in such matters. To Archie he said nothing about his embar-

rassment, and there was nothing in his manner to lead his friend to suspect it.

The two young men, as the ladies had done before them, ran lightly up the steps and entered the hall, where Rush almost had his breath taken away by the dazzling light and the perfume of flowers. He followed Archie up-stairs, where they left their top-coats; and, taking a sidelong glance at himself in the mirror to see that his tie had not ridden up over his collar and that his hair was not too much rumpled, he descended with Archie to the drawing-room. Here a gorgeous scene presented itself. The long rooms were brilliantly lighted with wax candles and decorated with more flowers than Rush had ever seen together in his life. The ladies were dressed in their finest Paris gowns; but it was not so much the dressing as the want of it that astonished our young countryman: the older the ladies were, the less they seemed to fear the cold.

Archie presented him at once to his uncle and aunt and to his cousin Bessie, for whom Rush immediately conceived the friendliest feelings. Bessie Archer certainly was an attractive girl. She was handsome and well made, and she looked like a girl who enjoyed good health. Her complexion was brilliant, her teeth dazzling, and her clear, gray-blue eyes looked as strong as an eagle's. Although she was an exceptionally clever girl, she was not a bit of a prig, and her manner was remarkable for its cordiality. When she took Rush by the hand she gave him such a firm, pleasant grip that he said to himself, "Here is a girl worth knowing; she shakes hands like a man; none of your flimsy, lackadaisical touching of the fingers, such as some girls give." And Bessie liked Rush at once. She had heard such pleasant things about him from Archie that she was naturally prejudiced in his favor; and it was impossible to look in his honest, manly face and not like him. "Now, Hurlstone, old fellow," said Archie, after introducing his friend to his cousin, "I will leave you to Cousin Bess's tender care and go where duty calls."

"I'm sure you could not leave me where I would rather be," said Rush, as glibly as though he had been "in society" all his life.

"Perhaps you will have a different tale to tell when Archie comes back," said Cousin Bess.

"I shall only speak more positively then," replied Rush, with a bow that Count d'Orsay might have envied.

At that moment the band, stationed in another room, struck up the music of a waltz, and there was a general movement of pleasant anticipation among the young people. Their elders drew up along the wall, and the dancers took their places on the floor.

"Do you dance, Mr. Hurlstone?" asked Miss Archer. "If you do, I will give you this waltz. I was saving it for Archie; but the poor fellow is not through with his day's work yet."

"No, Miss Archer," replied Rush, "I do not dance. I have heretofore looked upon a dancing man with a feeling of superiority; but now I regard him with envy, and for the first time regret that the steps of the waltz are a sealed book to me."

"I am very sorry, too; for I am afraid you are going to have a dull time, as this is a dancing company to-night. However, I will try and find a young lady whose conversation will in a measure alleviate your disappointment. Will you take something intellectual or something frivolous?" As Miss Archer asked this question, her eyes turned towards two ladies standing on the opposite side of the room.

Rush's eyes followed hers, and he answered, "Something frivolous, please."

So they threaded their way through the dancers, and he was introduced to Miss Gertie Gaston.

"How is it you are not dancing this evening, Miss Gaston?" Rush inquired, for he felt quite sure that she was one of the dancing girls.

"Do you want to know?"

"I am consumed with curiosity."

"Because I hate a plain waltz, and none of these men know the 'dip,'" she answered, with a show of annoyance.

"What ignorance! I fancied New York men knew everything. To think of it! grown men, and not know the 'dip'!"

"You know it?" said Miss Gaston, half rising.

"Alas, no!" replied Rush; "but, then, I am not a New York society man."

"Where are you from,—Boston or Philadelphia?"

"Neither: I came direct from the country,—from the abode of the milk-pail and the sausage."

"Really! and you work on a farm?—get up at five in the morning, milk the cows, and all that sort of thing?"

"I never have; but I dare say I could, if the cows would let me try."

"I should not think you would care to try," said Miss Gaston, with a movement of disapproval. "I should think a man might find something more manly to do than milking cows."

"No doubt he might; dancing, for instance?"

"Yes, indeed. He could learn the 'dip' in much less time than it would take him to learn to milk a cow."

Rush looked at the young lady to see if she was guying him, but the

expression of her face showed that she was thoroughly in earnest. He began to wish that he had chosen the intellectual lady, but the snatches of her conversation that reached him were not tempting. "I maintain," she was saying to a bald gentleman who was doing his best to suppress a yawn, "I maintain that Greek should be taught in the public schools; and you, Mr. Garside, should look to it, as a member of the Board of Education, and see that our young girls and boys are taught that classic language instead of these vile modern tongues that are only useful for mercantile pursuits. Greek is a purely intellectual language. Herodotus would——" But here Bessie Archer whirled past Rush in the arms of West Hastings, and gave him one of her sweetest smiles as she passed: so he never knew what Herodotus would have done.

Rush wished from the bottom of his heart that the dancing would stop, and that he might have a chance to talk a little with Miss Archer, who was quite as bright, he saw, as her cousin had represented her to be. The thought had hardly passed through his mind when the music ceased and the dancers strolled off in pairs. A young man dressed in the extreme of the fashion relieved him of Miss Gaston, and he stood for a moment leaning against the wall, wondering where Miss Archer was, when suddenly his heart gave such an upward lunge that he thought for a few seconds he should suffocate. But it soon fell back to its natural place, and left him at liberty to feast his eyes upon the radiant face of Helen Knowlton, as she entered the room accompanied by her aunt and an old gentleman whom he had no difficulty in recognizing as Uncle Lightfoot Myers.

A subdued murmur of admiration ran through the room as the prima donna stood for a moment on the threshold, looking about her for the host and hostess. In a moment West Hastings was by her side and conducting her on his arm to Mr. and Mrs. Archer, while Aunt Rebecca followed on the arm of Uncle Lightfoot. Rush ground his teeth at the assured manner in which Hastings took his place at Miss Knowlton's side. Then he tried to laugh at himself for being such a fool. "Of course they are engaged, or the next thing to it, and I am making myself miserable as foolishly as a man ever did." He got some comfort, however, from two men who stood chatting near by him.

"Is Helen Knowlton engaged to West Hastings?" asked one of the other.—"No," was the reply; "and she never will be engaged to Hastings or any other man while Aunt Rebecca lives. She may come near it fifty times, but I'll wager you anything you like that Aunt Rebecca Sandford is not going to let 'that child' put her head into the noose. And she's about right. Come, let's go out and have a B. and

S." And they sauntered out, leaving Rush in a pleasanter state of mind than he was in five minutes before. If Helen Knowlton was not engaged to West Hastings or to any other man, then he didn't see that his chances were utterly worthless ; at any rate, he was not going to retire from the field until after he had done some prospecting. Rush Hurlstone, though as modest a young man as you would meet in a day's walk, was firm in the belief that a man could accomplish anything he made up his mind to do, provided it was at all within the possibilities. If he had seriously set his mind upon being President of the United States, he would have gone quietly along working towards that end, thoroughly convinced that he would accomplish his object. But he had no political aspirations. His ambition ran in another channel.

Helen Knowlton was now chatting with Bessie Archer and three or four men at the opposite end of the room. Rush's eyes were fastened upon her. He was thinking of her with all his mind, and she probably felt the magnetism of his glance, for she looked up, and, recognizing the face without being able to tell where she had seen it, she bowed to him in her most cordial manner. Aunt Rebecca, who never forgot the face of a newspaper-man, bowed too, and motioned for Rush to come over to their side of the room,—an invitation he was not slow in accepting.

"How are you?" she said, giving him her hand.—"Helen, here is Mr. Hailstorm, the young reporter who wrote that nice article about you in *The Dawn*."

Rush was rather embarrassed by this public announcement of his vocation, and annoyed by the miscalling of his name ; but the hearty manner in which Miss Knowlton received him made amends for her aunt's want of tact.

"I recognized Mr. Hurlstone, and bowed to him across the room," said she, giving him her hand, whose touch sent an electric thrill through his entire frame. "Some other time I will thank him for his kindness, if he will allow me."

"So you know Mr. Hurlstone?" said Bessie. "He is an old college friend of Archie's, who brought him to us this evening that we might see for ourselves that all the nice things he had said about him were true."

"And do you think they are?" asked Helen, smiling upon Rush.

"We hope for the best," replied Bessie ; "but I shall be able to speak with more authority after Mr. Hurlstone has made this house his head-quarters for a while."

Rush thanked Miss Archer for the implied invitation, but said he felt more like hiding his head in a hole after Archie's compliments than trying to prove their truth ; and thus they chatted and laughed, after the

manner of young people at a party, until something was said about the banjo. Rush's reply led Helen to believe that he played that instrument, and she asked him if he did. He confessed that he "picked out a tune occasionally," and she invited him to come around some evening when there was no opera and try some duets with her, for she delighted in the banjo and found it a great recreation after grand opera.

Again the musicians struck up a waltz. West Hastings leaned down and whispered something in Helen's ear. She looked as though what he said had pleased her, and at once arose to dance with him. Again Rush ground his teeth. For a moment he wondered if he was too old to learn the mysteries of the waltz; but he could not help smiling as he thought of himself whirling about over a polished floor with a young woman in his arms. Then he inwardly railed at a custom that allowed such liberties. Because the band was playing and their feet were moving in time to the music, was that any reason why Hastings should have his arm around Miss Knowlton's waist and hold her hand in his? He could not see that it was. Dancing was a vulgar and vicious pastime, and he would never allow a sister of his to take part in any such wickedness. He did not stop to think that no sister of his would be likely to ask his permission. His eyes were bent upon the ground as these thoughts flew through his brain. A faint odor of mignonette reached him. He looked up just as Hastings and Miss Knowlton were gliding past.

"Here I am at last, old man," said Archie, at his shoulder,—"just ready for an evening's fun. My day's work is done, and I'm in prime condition for dancing. Seen the Knowlton? Ah, there she goes! Lucky beggar, that Hastings. They're engaged, you may bet your life. Come, let's have a glass of fizz. Uncle Archer is famous for his wines. I can promise you something good."

"No, thank you, Archie; I think I'll go home. I'm pretty tired. You know the social whirlpool is new to me. You don't mind, do you? I'll make my adieux to Mr. and Mrs. Archer and your charming cousin, and slip off to my virtuous couch."

"As you please, dear boy: I never like to force a fellow against his inclination," Archie answered; but he was evidently annoyed and disappointed that his friend should go so early.

"I shall never forget this evening, Archie. Good-night, old fellow. I'll hunt you up some time to-morrow."

So this foolish boy said good-night to his entertainers and went out under the stars. He had hardly reached the sidewalk before he repented his act. What an idiot to leave the place where Helen was! But he could not stand the torture of seeing her dancing with West Hastings.

He would rather be out in the cool night air; but he could not tear himself away from the place. Lighting a cigar, he paced the length of the park, always with the house in view, and by the time he had finished it, he saw the door open and Helen and her aunt and Uncle Lightfoot and West Hastings coming out.

The gentlemen put the ladies in their carriage, and, closing the door upon them, bowed them off. Thank heaven, he was not going home with her!

The carriage started down Twentieth Street; but it had not reached Fourth Avenue when Rush started after it. The horses trotted briskly, and so did Rush. It was not far to Helen's house, so that he arrived there just as the carriage drew up at the curb. Before he had time to think what he was doing, the handle of the carriage door was in his hand and he was making his best bow to the ladies. They were startled at first, but were reassured when they recognized Rush.

"How very odd that you should have happened by just at this moment!" said Helen.

"Chance has been kind to me," answered Rush, trying to speak without showing how blown he was. "I'm on my way home. I don't live far from here."

He didn't say it was a very roundabout way of getting to his lodgings, nor did Helen suspect it. He handed the ladies to their door and bade them good-night.

"Don't forget that you are to come and play the banjo with me," said Helen.

Forget! Rush laughed so heartily at the thought as he turned the corner of Twentieth Street into Sixth Avenue that a sleepless invalid tossing on his couch listened with envy to a man who was well and happy enough to laugh so long and loud.

CHAPTER VII.

In the mean time, everything at the old home at Farmsted was not as Rush would have wished it to be. John Hurlstone, as I have intimated, was a young man fond of his pleasures,—so fond, indeed, that the pain they caused to others, and those, too, whom he held most dear, did not prevent his enjoying them to the full. Apparently, he was the kindest of sons and most affectionate of brothers. He was never known to give his mother a cross or impatient word in his life, and his attentions to his sisters were all that they could ask and more than they could ex-

pect, judging from the relations of other young men in their circle to their sisters. He was very popular in the village, for he was not only the most amiable but the gayest and handsomest young fellow in all those parts; and there was a dash of the hero about him, too,—for he had served with distinction in the army, having gone in as a private and won his captain's straps by sheer bravery and devotion to duty. Fonder of luxury than any man I ever met, he fairly revelled in hardship when it had to be endured. Easy-going as he was by nature, and slow to act under ordinary circumstances, he was as quick as a flash in an emergency. At home he was never on time, no matter what the urgency of the case; in the army he was punctuality itself. The most dandified about his toilet arrangements, and taking as much time to array himself as the vainest belle, he would take a snow-bath if he could get no other, dry himself in the sun, and be ready for marching in five minutes. His mattress at home had to be of a particularly choice quality of curled hair and the springs of the very best steel, or he could not sleep. In the army he would roll himself up in a blanket, lie in the mud during a pelting storm, and sleep as peacefully as a child. John Hurlstone was made up of contradictions. He loved his mother so tenderly that he was completely unnerved if she was ill, and waited upon her with the gentle devotion of a daughter; yet he did not hesitate to do things that he knew would break her heart, simply to gratify his own pleasure. He would have given his last crust to his mother and sisters, yet he would not do an honest day's work to save them from want. He did not say that he would not; he simply did not, and that was the end of the matter. His mother and sisters were devoted to him. They knew he was thoroughly selfish, but he was so sweet and kind at home that they forgave him everything. Women always liked him; men—that is, the serious-minded—regarded him less leniently. Among the class popularly known as "the boys" he was a prime favorite. They admired his cleverness, and he was pleased by their homage. He would sit for an hour at a time talking with big Sandy, the village blacksmith, a miserable, drunken fellow, because, he said, "Sandy is so fond of me." Every barkeeper in the town and every hanger-on of the saloons shook him by the hand and swore that "Cap'n Jack" was a "perfec' gemman." The attentions of the Prince of Wales are no sweeter to the professional beauty than were these words of compliment to Captain John Hurlstone.

John received the attentions of the young ladies more modestly. He never boasted of his conquests: indeed, he did not seem to think that he had made any. He never tired of telling how fond he was of the girls, individually and collectively, but that they were fond of him he mod-

estly denied. "They know I love them all, and they feel sorry for me," he used to say, laughingly. John Hurlstone was the most dangerous sort of a flirt, for he was really in love for the time being with each of the girls he flirted with. When he transferred his very special attention from one to another, he did so in the kindest manner, and seemed always to have a warm place in his heart for the old love. At the time of which I am now writing, he was paying marked attention, even for him, to Amy Bayliss, the pretty little simple-minded daughter of the Rev. Dr. Bayliss, rector of St. Ann's Church in the village. It was more than whispered that John Hurlstone was engaged to Amy Bayliss, but nothing authoritative was known upon the subject. But the dashing beauty Emily Barford denied the rumor flatly, and said that John Hurlstone was not the man to be caught by a baby face; that he was amusing himself with Amy Bayliss because he saw, as every one could see, that she was dead in love with him. Emily Barford, like many a clever girl before her, did not understand men as well as she thought she did, and in the case of John Hurlstone was entirely mistaken. He was just the man to be caught by a "baby face;" and when Amy Bayliss rolled her big blue eyes up towards his and stretched her little mouth with a smile that showed two rows of the whitest teeth, the big heart of Captain John swelled to bursting, and he swore to himself that he was at last madly and seriously in love.

John Hurlstone had been a hard drinker at different times in his life, but the folks at home had never seen him under the influence of liquor. He either went without drink altogether or he gave himself up to it. They used to say in the army that he could drink the entire mess under the table. He didn't care much for champagne, though when he was thirsty he would fill a celery-glass and drain it to the bottom. But this was done rather to amuse or astonish his companions than to slake his thirst. Hard liquors were his choice, and when he once began on them he kept it up in a way that would have killed most men. He was a convivial drinker, and seldom, unless to wipe out the memory of something unpleasant, took a drink alone. When he had money, he treated the crowd; when he had none, the crowd treated him.

When he had money! There was a mystery about John's money. Sometimes he was absolutely penniless; again he would be quite flush, and his pocket-book would be stuffed out with greenbacks of large as well as small denominations. His mother was the most unsuspicious of women, and when she said to him one day, "John, dear, where do you get so much money?" he answered her in his most ingenuous manner, sealing the statement with a kiss, "The government owes me a lot of back pay, mother, and every once in a while it pays up. Some day

it will be all paid : then I'll have to go to work like Rush and the rest of the boys."

She was perfectly satisfied, poor woman. How little she knew—it is just as well that she didn't—that there were as hard and daring gamblers in that little town of Farmsted as the metropolis itself could boast,—not only among the low fellows in the bar-rooms, who played for small stakes and lost as little as they won, but among an outwardly respectable class. There was a little club of six, of whom John Hurlstone was the youngest (and the sharpest), who met on certain nights in a private room in the Union House and played high till the gray light of dawn crept in through the chinks in the window-shutters and warned them that some busy housewife, up betimes, would see them slinking home in the small hours unless they stole away at once. What consternation there would have been in Farmsted if the knowledge of this little card-party had come to the ears of the gossips of that quiet town! for these men were the "solid men" of the place,—the retired merchants, lawyers, and bankers; and one of the number (I regret to betray it) was a vestryman of St. Ann's, and took up the collection every Sunday. This worthy man was indignant that John Hurlstone should be paying court to the rector's daughter. "The young scapegrace!" he muttered behind his sanctimonious, smooth-shaven lip; "I should like to tell Dr. Bayliss of his wickedness." But, much as he would have liked to expose the young man, he hesitated, for fear the young man might in turn expose him.

The more John Hurlstone thought of marrying Amy Bayliss the more his conscience pricked him, not only on account of the error of his present way, but also on account of the past. To blunt the points that pricked, he had recourse to his favorite liquor; but kept the knowledge of his dissipation from his family, for they never asked when he came home. His bedroom was on the ground-floor, and he could admit himself through the French window if there was any reason to suppose his entrance by the door would be heard.

One night the card-party held a very late session, and the vestryman, who had had an unusual run of luck, insisted upon "whooping it up and letting the devil take the consequences." This sentiment thoroughly harmonized with John's mood, and he brewed a bowl of punch that was as seductive as it was treacherous. The vestryman smacked his lips and slapped John on the back with brotherly affection. "Never tasted anything so good in m'life. What d'yer call it, Jack, old feller?" he said, helping himself to a fifth ladleful.

"I don't know what the right name is," answered Jack, "but in the army they called it hell-broth."

"The devil they did!" exclaimed the vestryman: "they're a wicked lot in the army."

Finally, it was proposed that the party should break up, and, as the night was breaking up too, and the punch was all drunk, the motion was adopted, and the vestryman and the lawyer, the banker and the merchants, linked arms and took the middle of the road until their paths diverged. Then they parted, after oft-repeated vows of undying friendship.

John had the farthest to go, and the punch was well down in his legs before he got half-way home. His head swam, and he put up his listless hands to wipe away the cobwebs from his face. How sleepy he felt! He wanted to lie down along the road; but something impelled him to keep on, and on he went, his uncertain footsteps taking him within an inch of ditches, heaps of stone, and the rows of trees that flanked the paths. At last he reached the homestead gate. What was the matter with the latch? It seemed possessed of a devil. (John never for a moment suspected that he was the one so possessed.) But finally it yielded to his fumbling, and swung back with a bang against the fence.

His mother, always a light sleeper, heard the unusual noise, and came to the window to see what was the matter. "Some stray horse or cow must have pushed the gate open," she thought. "I must see that a better latch is put on."

Thus musing, she looked down upon the path, and saw the figure of a man staggering up the walk.

What is it that puts so fine an edge upon a mother's intuitions? Mrs. Hurlstone had never seen a son of hers intoxicated, yet her heart sank within her, and she knew in a moment whose figure that was, and the cause of its unsteadiness. Hastily thrusting her feet into her slippers and wrapping her dressing-gown about her, she ran noiselessly down-stairs, fearful lest she should be heard and John's disgrace made known to the family. With trembling fingers she turned the heavy key in the lock, and stepped out upon the wide piazza.

Where was John?

There,—that limp and lifeless body lying at the foot of the steps,—that was John,—her first-born, her beautiful boy, covered with mud, his hair tumbled about and matted on his forehead, his face pale and bloated, breathing long, heavy breaths. That was John!

Once, years ago, she had seen a miserable tramp lying drunk in the gutter, and had pitied him that he could be so base a thing. And here was her own son in the same condition. She knew at a glance what was the matter with him, and when she stooped down to put her

hands upon his brow she smelt the stale, foul liquor that puffed up from his half-open mouth.

"John! John!" she cried, in very agony; "wake up, my son; come into the house and let me put you to bed. It is your mother, John, who is speaking to you."

No answer but John's heavy snores. She got down on the gravel, and held his head in her lap, and tried every means in her power to wake him; but he slept on. She thought he must be dying, and her hot tears rained upon his face. Still he slept. The gray dawn was breaking over the wooded east. Streaks of silver and gold shot through the pine-trees. In a short time the family would be up, or a neighbor passing by would stop to ask what was the matter. She must get him into the house, into his own room, and there try to revive him.

Just as she was about to exert all her strength to lift him, she heard footsteps on the gravel, and saw old Pete, the colored man-of-all-work, coming around a corner of the house. Old Pete was an early riser, and liked to have his chores done "before the day got ahead of him," so he said. The old man stood for a moment and surveyed the scene. He took in the situation at a glance, and from his coolness in the matter one might have inferred that it was not the first time that he had seen his young master in this condition.

"Oh, Pete, Pete, what shall we do? Mr. John is very ill, and I can't wake him," sobbed Mrs. Hurlstone.

"Jes' you go in the house and leave him to me, Miss Kitty: I'll soon bring him to," said Pete, laying down the bucket he was carrying to the well.

"What are you going to do to him?" anxiously inquired the mother, kissing her son's damp forehead.

"This ain't no place for you, Miss Kitty; you go inside out of the cold. Jes' leave him to me. I'll rub his years: that'll bring him round." And he suited the action to the word, rubbing the young man's ears with his horny palms till the mother begged him to stop. But Pete knew what he was about, for in a minute or two John opened his eyes in a dull, listless way, stared at his mother, and closed them again. Then Pete resumed his rubbing, and he opened his eyes wider and tried to get up.

"Go into the house, please, Miss Kitty: this ain't no sight for you to see. Leave him to me. I'll get him to bed." And he gently pushed his mistress inside the door, and then he helped his master to his feet.

"What's the matter, Pete?" said John, rubbing his eyes.

"Nothin' uncommon," answered Pete, laconically. "Jes' take my arm, and I'll help yer to bed."

John took the arm of the faithful negro, and, staggering slightly, got to his room, where the old man undressed him and put him in his soft white bed. There he soon fell fast asleep, but not so heavily this time. While the son was sleeping in his room, the mother was lying on her couch up-stairs, racked by a grief too deep for tears. But she knew that she must get up and put on a cheerful face before her children and be ready to answer any questions they might ask her about John. Fortunately, John was never an early riser, so their suspicions were not very much excited. They asked why he didn't come to breakfast, and their mother replied that he had a bad headache,—perhaps a truer statement than she had thought. About eleven o'clock John appeared upon the scene, and, except for a slight pallor in his cheeks and a faint tinge of gray under his eyes, he looked as fresh as a rose. He had had a cold bath, a good rubbing down, and a cup of hot coffee, and he felt pretty bright. His hands trembled a little as he held the morning paper up to read, and he had no appetite for the nice little breakfast his mother brought him; otherwise he was in fine condition. He had forgotten all about the night before, and he wondered if it could have been a tear he saw in his mother's eye when she kissed him good-morning. The mail had just been fetched up from the post-office, and Mrs. Hurlstone handed John a large, business-like envelope, addressed to him in a rough hand. An elaborate stamp on the outside bore the name of "The Grand Mutual Dividend Mining Company."

John ripped open the envelope nervously, and his eyes glistened as they ran down the page.

"Mother, this is from Colonel Mortimer, of Ours: he has organized a mining company on a new plan, and he wants me for secretary. He offers a good salary and little work, and I am to go to New York at once. I'm sorry to leave you, mother dear, but this is an opportunity not to be lost. Mortimer has a great head for schemes. If he goes into one you may be sure there's money in it,—at least for him," added John, with a laugh.

Mrs. Hurlstone did not join in the laugh; for if there was a man in the world whom she feared and disliked it was Colonel Andrew Mortimer. He was a brave soldier, but a corrupt and hardened man, and she knew that his influence over John was anything but good.

"You don't congratulate me, mother," said John, gayly, putting his arm around her waist and kissing her. Indeed she did not. How could she, knowing all she knew?

(To be continued.)

TWO DAYS IN UTAH.

BY AN IMPRESSIONIST.

THE most patient student of statistics and reader of the newspapers would be apt on impulse, if asked to define Mormon, to answer, thoughtlessly, "Mormon? Why, a Mormon is a polygamist." He may know that polygamy was an after-thought in the Mormon Church, subtly introduced by cunning leaders; he may even know that only two and a half per cent. of the Mormon population practise polygamy; but that every Mormon, in becoming a Mormon, tacitly sanctions, if he does not practise, the frightful rite, underlies his knowledge and permeates his judgment. No one would think of advancing the impressions of two days as serious facts, or reasons for formulating theories, or profound investigation of the subject, or grounds for forming a basis of action; but, if given and accepted merely as impressions, they may have their interest, if of no particular value.

And the first of these impressions is that polygamy is not a favorite feature of Mormonism to the Mormons themselves. Where are the polygamists? you keep asking. True, you have seen in the papers that Taylor and Cannon and other leaders are in hiding, that several are in the penitentiary, and that the United States government is vigorously prosecuting the evil-doers; but you were unprepared to find the vigor actually so vigorous and to be impressed with the fact that at present no man dares to practise polygamy publicly. You are thus wonderfully encouraged as to what the government is accomplishing, but you are far more encouraged by the impression that the government will eventually root out the horror more easily because *at heart* the bulk of the Mormon people are more than willing that it should be rooted out. You are shown the most charming residences in the city, and are told that they belong either to Gentiles or to Mormons who have become Gentiles. You are shown the homes of the city officials, who are all Mormons, but not polygamists, as no polygamist can hold a government office. You are told that of General Claussou's thirty children none like polygamy except the eldest son, who is in the penitentiary for liking it. You are driven to an exquisite, rose-embowered cottage, and say, with a sigh, "Can polygamy dwell in such a paradise?" and are assured, "Oh, no: the owner is a Mormon with one wife." The editor of the leading Mormon paper calls upon you, and you ask the friend who introduces him, "Has he ever had more than one wife?" to be

answered in the negative. A tall, spirited, tremendously-in-earnest young leader speaks at the Tabernacle on Sunday on the virtues of Mormonism and the cruelty of government persecution; and when you ask, "How many wives?" the answer is, "One." Of course, in one sense, this not a ground for judgment as to the unpopularity of polygamy among the Mormons themselves, because no one now dares to have more than one wife; but it is a relief to find that they cannot dare, and some reliance is to be placed upon it for inference because so many never took a second wife when they did dare. The men who already have two or more wives will fight to the last and go to the penitentiary rather than desert the women who have trusted them,—a faithfulness which has an honorable side, it is to be remembered, since many ask only to be allowed to support the women they have promised to support, and to be allowed to see the children who are at least their children; but the younger men, who have as yet had but one wife, will never fight, with any resistance to be feared, for the privilege of having more,—the light undercurrent of the simplest conversation showing with many how thankful they would be not to have the Church expect it of them. Why, then, do these spirited young men, who have not, and who do not want, more than one wife, write and talk as if they did, as if the government that persecuted that one feature were the most cruel in the world, as if the man who did have more than one wife could still be a decent member of society?

They speak and write thus, not because they want more wives, but because *they remember their mothers.*

For one long-misunderstood feature of Mormonism has lately been revealed in its true phases. It is natural to believe that none but the lowest class of women could submit to the indignities of a polygamist household. We have instinctively thought of them as necessarily fast and loose women, quite as bad as the men, and not to be tolerated in polite society. A little thought, even before actual investigation, will suggest that precisely the opposite must be the case. The women who accept polygamy may be fools to the point of idiocy in accepting anything so horrible with faith in it as a trial to be borne for the sake of religion; but, aside from the indisputable fact that probably the majority of these foolish suffering women are sincere, honest, faithful, upright creatures, it is evident, on reflection; that a fast or loose woman would refuse to submit to the indignities of a polygamist household quite as quickly as the indignant, intelligent, rightly-educated woman of Gentile birth and training. The dissolute woman, caring nothing for the comparative dignity of appearing as a wife, would not hastily give up her position as petted favorite, free to come, free to go, with

nothing expected of her but that she shall not bear children, to take a position divided with another, or others, to which she is bound for life, and in which the first thing expected of her is that she shall bear many children. Even as the latest wife, she can enjoy no position prominently as petted favorite. It is true that no man can love two women at the same time equally well, and that preference will be unconsciously shown in some way; but, while the Mormon etiquette that requires punctilious if perfunctory outward observance of devotion to every wife is in its way horrible, ridiculous, and shameful, it does not permit what would strike me as one of the terrible features of polygamy,—the desertion of the first wife for one with a prettier face or a better table. Every Mormon wife has her “week” for her husband, as the New York wife has her “day” for visitors. It is horrible, it is inconceivable, it must be stopped; but it is right that we understand precisely what it is that must be stopped. The highest type of woman would rather be deserted than waited upon with perfunctory devotion; yet it must still be acknowledged that one kind of fidelity, poor as it is of its kind, is exacted of both Mormon husband and wife. Thus, while the horrors of Mormonism will keep the best women from belonging to it, the obligations of Mormonism will with equal force prevent the worst women from joining it. There remains a poor, pitiable middle class, of women lowly and miserably born, hopelessly ignorant, ignominiously patient, easily made devotees, who are willing to undertake the obligations and the sacrifices of Mormonism, and who accept polygamy, not enjoying it, but honestly beguiled into believing their martyrdom honorable. The sons of such women, remembering what their mothers have been,—faithful, patient, loving, though misguided,—will not submit to hearing those mothers called anything but wives. The very martyrdom they may have seen them suffer may make them equally earnest in defending polygamy and in not practising it. This is a somewhat lengthy “impression,” it is true; but it means that the eager, denunciatory talk of the younger orators is not fraught with so much danger as it seems to be.

It is often said that Mormonism, as a religious belief, would be harmless except for polygamy. Nothing could be more unwise than to admit that. It is Mormonism itself, the union of church and state, the implied treason that will not rush to arms while it is allowed to flourish in a little feudal despotism of its own, the secret power which cares nothing for polygamy except as it believes polygamy may be a weapon in its hands,—it is Mormonism itself that is to be hated, to be feared, to be crushed. Show the Mormon that the other, deeper, subtler aims he has at heart cannot, must not, shall not be endured, and he will

drop his polygamy before you ask him to. Horrible as they are, Mormonism and polygamy have their supremely ridiculous aspects, and it is part of the supremely ridiculous that no man can possibly enjoy polygamy. If he practises it, it is to further other aims. In a community where he is bound to "cherish" all his wives, outwardly at least, and to provide for them all, where he cannot take refuge from the scold in the arms of the favorite, where he must appear on the appointed day at the door of the poor housekeeper as faithfully as on the other day at the table of the excellent cook, it may safely be presumed that polygamy brings its own penalties with it and would only be endured to secure another object. It has been wittily said that, with a railway through Utah, and Gentile ladies in Salt Lake City, the milliner and dress-maker can be trusted to work the much desired reform; and there is judgment, as well as wit, in the saying. Few men can afford to have a dozen wives and forty children to be supported in equal comfort and luxury.

That Mormonism must be crushed goes without saying; but in order to crush it we must understand what it is and what it is not, what it was rooted in, and what it purposes accomplishing. We can never crush it by rising in saintly wrath and saying, "Out upon you, you polygamists!" Were Gentile communities free from any similar plague-spot, then indeed our wrath might be effective as one of our weapons; but the Mormon has it in his power to laugh derisively, to point to his voluntary "victim" at least set openly in a household, to be "cherished" by him till death, to be honored for bearing him children whom he is pledged to support, and to ask, since it is impossible to deny the existence of Gentile "victims," whether the Gentiles who shield themselves by hypocrisy and who do not shield their victims at all, who are willing in secret to pronounce their ways sinful, but who continue sinning, are indeed so few in number that the Gentile community may point the finger of scorn at Mormons who at least accept all the consequences of their sin. It is possible to walk through the streets of Leadville and wonder, as you see the open gambling-dens and dance-houses, "After all, is such openness worse than the sin which in more conventional communities lurks behind the carefully-drawn curtains and eminently respectable front door?" For if in one sense the open door attracts, in another it repels. Of course, sober reflection convinces one that it is worse; for the shame that hides its sin at least is conscious of sin; but the other phase of it is possible as a point of view.

And it is the Mormon's point of view which it is necessary for us to understand. First, in what is Mormonism rooted?

In sensuality? To suppose so seems absurd. If sensuality could

indeed only be gratified by accepting such conditions as the Mormon imposes upon himself in living with more than one wife, it is possible that men over whom sensuality reigns supreme might even go so far as this to obtain what they care most for. Unhappily, it is not so difficult for sensuality to secure its victims. The sensualist does not need to hedge himself in behind life-long obligations; and that the Mormon honestly regards his obligations as life-long is shown by the willingness of so many to go to the penitentiary rather than desert the women—and children—of whom, as sensualists, they might not have been averse to ridding themselves. Mormonism is rooted in lust, if you will; but it is the lust, not of sensuality, but of power.

Power! power! power! political power! Men conscious that even the proverbial chance of the rail-splitter or the canal-boy would never bring such as they to the White House coveted power over large masses of men. They might not hope to subvert the government, but for that they would not care, provided they could rule supreme in a small local feudalism that should minister to their special greed. Cunning, unscrupulous, ambitious, nothing was too low for them to stoop to to secure their ends. The lowest classes are most easily swayed: hence they would be satisfied to rule over the lowest classes, if they could only rule. The lowest classes are most easily swayed by a religious motive: hence they would have a new religion. The tremendous fraud of that absurd religion has perhaps never been better exposed than by a trifle,—the discovery in the so-called Mormon bible of a mistake noted in the manuscript of the romance from which the bible was made up, which a friend had advised the author of the romance to alter, but which he had not yet changed at the time the manuscript was stolen to minister to a fraud to which he was no willing party. There should be a profound secrecy to fascinate the foolish; promise of earthly comfort to those so badly off that the prospect of food and lodging would be enough to make them accept any politics or religion: it was of no consequence at all what sort of people came under their sway; the less intelligent, the more easily managed; anything to swell the ranks. Into this scheme crept polygamy, as a factor for bringing large masses of people under the control of individuals. Women and children willing to accept, and brought up to accept, the outrageous Mormon theories, outrageous in more points than that of plural marriage, would be brought under the control of one head. Instead of one wife and two or three children, the Mormon should control a dozen wives and forty children. The women should have a vote in a community where the authority of a few is best shown by the fact that votes in the assemblies are invariably unanimous. That its sensual side would help to attract the sensual would be so much

gain, though sensuality can hardly have been the first motive for introducing polygamy. If it had been, the leaders would have been satisfied with permitting polygamy; whereas, in the days when they were left to themselves, it is well known that they practically insisted on it. Make impossible any advantages to be gained politically by numbers, and the Mormon will be satisfied with the average number of children, and more than satisfied to live with only one wife.

To the impressionist, boarding comfortably at the Walker House and driving about a pretty city most beautifully located (though, be it known, the far-famed thrift of the Mormons in redeeming Salt Lake from the desert does not strike one as overwhelming, remembering how much more the thrift of a different class of people has done in less time for Denver), the ludicrous side of Mormonism will naturally present itself most vividly. His letters of introduction are to the better class of Mormons, although the friends who had given most of them had said, "We are sorry there are so few; but most of our Gentile friends have moved away, and most of our Mormon acquaintances are in the penitentiary." He sees uppermost the perfect absurdity, the ridiculous situations, of it all, and it adds to his light-heartedness—when conscience takes him to task for being amused by anything so hateful—to find the United States really and truly at work, the people really and truly scared, and the better class of Mormons quietly shrugging their shoulders in private conversation, with a grimace that means, "Make it impossible for us to be polygamists, and we will thank you from our hearts." Out in the country, among the worst class of Mormons, where they are free from the restraints and watchfulness of a city, one hears of bitter cruelties arising from the state of things,—of brutal men, not incurring double obligations to two wives, but saving themselves from all labor by putting two wives to work instead of one. It is easy for the imagination to picture the hideousness that is out of sight, with tacit acknowledgment that probably the hideousness and cruelty and suffering are infinitely greater than the imagination can conceive; but on the surface the absurdity of the thing strikes one first, with the comfortable reflection that it cannot be possible for anything so ridiculous to survive long. It is possible, too, for an optimist to look over the vast crowd at the Tabernacle, and to think, as he gazes at the most pitiable, most unintelligent faces he has ever seen, while he notes the sleek, comfortable, and contented appearance of the people, that perhaps, in the mercy of God, even Mormonism, for just this class of persons, has been a rise in life, it being always remembered that the great bulk of the Mormon people care nothing for polygamy, and are foolish Mormons only in their acceptance of what is to most of

us a self-evident fraud, and in their blind obedience to unprincipled leaders.

It is the peculiarity of the form of evil-doing which Mormonism brings in its train, that it is possible for many of the evil-doers to be honest in intent and sincere in conviction. Such evil must be uprooted ; but it requires peculiar methods. It must be undermined, not attacked. It is not a case for the pruning-knife, nor even for the axe. It is a case for quiet loosening of the earth about the roots by a gentle but judicious spade, with the burning sun of clear, scorching daylight pouring down continually on the exposed roots, and finally for several decisive lifts with an unhesitating shovel that shall fling the obnoxious growth upon the ash-heap. The Mormon must be approached, not from our point of view, but from his. It will be of no use to shriek at him that he is an idiot and a knave : if he is a cunning leader he knows that he is a knave, if he is an ignorant follower he does not know that he is an idiot. In neither case will he care in the least what you call him. The knave must be shown that his political aims and intrigues are futile ; the idiot must be made to understand that he is an idiot. It is impossible not to see that the bitter persecution they suppose themselves to be enduring is a very strong bond of union among classes to whom the idea of martyrdom always appeals strongly. Go to the Tabernacle ; listen to what is supposed to be a religious service, but is really a bitter political tirade, and it is impossible not to see that the poor, dull-witted, ignorant listeners are rolling the sentences of the speaker about martyrdom, persecution, suffering for the truth, as choice morsels under their tongues. For this martyrdom is not such as to cause any great difference in their comfort. The persecution does not take the form of lessening their creature comforts ; it does not lower their wages, nor banish them as social outcasts, nor decrease their opportunities, nor forbid them from worshipping God in any way they please. It merely says that they are idiots for worshipping Joseph Smith, and insists that they shall not have two wives. Most of them greatly prefer not to have two wives, and many of them are beginning to think that leaders who refuse to take the penalties of their position, and who keep out of the penitentiary by skulking, are not, after all, heroic, fascinating, lovable Prince Charles Edwards, to be aided in their skulking and admired for their sufferings, but the conscienceless, selfish, ambitious pretenders that the rest of the world have long known them to be. Under these circumstances, in no way made uncomfortable by persecution, it is delightful to hear themselves called martyrs. Social stigma does not disturb them, for they are recruited from classes who never enjoyed any social distinction. It is highly probable that no one ever became a

Mormon without, in the quaint old phrase, bettering himself in creature comforts. The part these have played in tempting poverty-stricken, sin-laden, indolent, wicked, toil-worn "converts" can hardly be overestimated. A home, land, work,—what have not these meant to the forlorn creatures that have been enticed to the New World? Even those who went first into the wilderness gave up nothing, it is safe to say, in leaving the worse wilderness of sin and folly and lack of opportunity which they left behind them. Creature comforts have built up the Mormon clique: it remains for intelligence to destroy it. For Mormonism, as for barbarism and heathenism, the surest cure is civilization. The railway through Utah, with its attendant milliners and dress-makers, bringing into juxtaposition with the Mormon Griseldas Gentile wives in honored happiness, and making no longer possible the seclusion which bred brutal cruelty and impossibility of escape, might almost be trusted alone to undermine polygamy. But civilization, though so sure a cure for many evils, is too slow a one for the hateful influence of Mormonism. There must be the shovel to dig up, as well as the spade to loosen. There must be the prick of the bayonet when we begin to hear of United States flags at half-mast on the Fourth of July. The quicker the evil of Mormonism is recognized as political, not social, the quicker the social evils in the train of political intrigue will wither and die.

To destroy Mormonism, it is not enough for us to hate it; we must make the Mormon himself hate it. Before we try to kill it by superior strength, we must understand what forces keep it alive. Intelligent convictions could never be killed, even by superior strength. But a Mormon's convictions are not intelligent, though sometimes sincere. Three forces have tended to keep alive what it would seem as if the merest common sense must have strangled almost as soon as born: in the Mormon leader, grovelling ambition, not caring what it rules over so long as it can rule, and rejoicing in its brute cunning; in the Mormon disciple, the sheer pleasure of improvement in creature comforts; in the Mormon woman, whose burden seems to an outsider too intolerable for her endurance to be credible, the perfect openness of her position. Terrible as it is, the world knows that she chose to accept it with all its horrible conditions. How far that goes to supporting a woman through the trials most abhorrent to her it is difficult to judge. The woman who *knows*, and who knows that you know that she knows, can bear an almost inconceivable amount of suffering, even of the kind most frightful to her nature; the woman who *discovers*, who finds that she has been a dupe, who hears the world whispering, "Poor thing! she didn't know!" can suffer infinitely greater torture over a lesser degree of

offence. What you *tell* your wife against yourself she will forgive to an almost incredible extent ; what she *discovers* against you she will never forgive. Nothing can be forced upon the Mormon wife which she did not tacitly say to all the world in the first place that she expected and was willing to endure. This is no apology for her doing so : it is merely a reason for comprehending how so many Mormon women live through the agony which their position must force upon them, however honestly they believe that they are martyrs for the Lord. The Mormon wife knows that you cannot say of her, " Poor dupe !" even if you say, " Poor fool !"

Such are some of the forces that help to keep Mormonism alive. They are hateful, they are dangerous, they are insidious ; but they are not so hopeless as if behind them lurked such convictions as moved the Puritan Fathers.

Alice Wellington Rollins.

TO WALT WHITMAN.

THE April torrent, shining at its source
 A thread of glass above the dappled clay,
 Has burst the banks along the narrow course
 And sent a freshet roaring on its way :
 From hill to hill the crested waters go,
 The swollen eddies heaving in their train,
 As foam and drift and rain and melting snow
 Urge the brown billows to the tumbling main.

So has that large and crystal heart of thine
 Let loose the slipping earth on either side,
 And stirred the dregs of passions half divine
 To flood its channel with a turgid tide ;
 But age draws on to waste the manly frame,
 Whose broken walls shall set the current free,
 And all the stream of mingled pride and shame
 Roll down its burden on the limpid sea.

Dora Read Goodale.

A BACHELOR'S BLUNDER.

CHAPTER XIII.

JACOB STILES.

IT can hardly be expected that the reader will recollect a passing allusion once made by Mr. Herbert to a certain young *protégé* of his, named Jacob Stiles. The fact is that Mr. Herbert was not very fond of alluding to this youth, whose benefactor he had been, having reasons for keeping silence about him besides those which modesty must always impose upon the truly charitable.

Jacob Stiles, as his name (which was a source of deep grief to him) almost seemed to imply, was an object of charity, and since his early childhood had never been anything else. It had come to pass that, as Dick Herbert was riding homeward one autumn evening shortly after he had attained his majority,—and consequently some fifteen years before the date of the present narrative,—his path was abruptly stopped by a diminutive urchin, who piped out, “Oh, if you please, sir, father said I was to arst you what’s won the Leger.” Dick, then, as always, a man of few words, gave the desired information, glanced curiously at his ragged, black-eyed little questioner, and rode on. The incident might have escaped his memory, had not the result of that particular St. Leger brought about a tragic occurrence of which he, in common with the rest of the neighborhood, was speedily informed. This was the suicide of one Stiles, a stranger in those parts, who had recently been taken as a rough-rider into the employment of a local horse-dealer, and who was found hanging in his master’s stables on the morning after the race, with the following brief confession in the pocket of his coat: “It’s the Leger as done it. I don’t want no more of this life. Will some kind friend please to save my poor little lad from the workus?”

This appeal found its way to the somewhat soft heart of Dick Herbert. He sought out the boy, found him in one of the cottages in the village, recognized him as the same whom he had encountered on the previous evening, carried him off to Farndon Court to be washed, fed, and comforted, and retained him there with a view to discovering, as he said, “what could be made of him.” A great many things might have been made of him, for he proved to be one of the sharpest boys that ever was known; but perhaps a judicious person, remember-

ing the proverb about silk purses and sows' ears, would have reflected that there were certain things into which he could not possibly be turned. Dick Herbert was only twenty-one at that time, and was not quite as judicious as he subsequently became. He was delighted with the little fellow's shrewd replies to his questions; he was still more delighted to see with what tenacity that atom could stick to a horse; and when he discovered that Jacob, in addition to his other talents, could draw with a precision and spirit amazing in one of such tender years, he concluded that, if ever there was a case in which a thorough education would be a boon worth bestowing, it was here.

This was all very well; but to remove the boy entirely out of the station to which he had been born was another affair. To do Dick justice, he had at first no intention of falling into any such error. He proposed to have his *protégé* educated, and then to give him a start in whatever trade he might seem to be best fitted for. But there were difficulties in the way of carrying out this sensible programme. Jacob learned with surprising rapidity; in everything that he undertook he excelled; as he grew older he manifested a decided dislike to associating with the servants, who, on their side, cordially reciprocated his sentiments. Thus it came about that when he was at Farndon for the holidays he spent most of his time in the company of his patron (who preferred not to be called his master), and was made a great deal of by his patron's bachelor friends.

Farndon Court was then a house in which only bachelors and married men on leave of absence were to be met; for old Mrs. Herbert, who was still alive, dwelt at a watering-place in the West of England, the climate of Berkshire not agreeing with her health. One may conjecture that had any lady presided over Dick's household that clever young outcast, Jacob Stiles, would not have been permitted to dine with his betters and adjourn to the billiard-room or the smoking-room with them later in the evening. But if the lad got any harm from such associations it was not apparent upon the surface. His schoolmasters gave glowing reports of him; his career was decided upon: he was in due time to become an artist, and there was every ground for believing that he would also become a successful one. Whence he derived his pictorial skill was a mystery of which his defective pedigree could afford no solution, but a very simple application of the law of inheritance sufficed to account for his great love and knowledge of horses; and it must be owned that this endeared him to Dick more than all his other gifts put together. Mr. Herbert can hardly be said to have been at any time upon the turf; but he usually had one or two animals in training, and he kept a few brood mares with a view to raising

thoroughbred stock. Now, Jacob's eye for a horse was nothing short of marvellous. Not only was his opinion invaluable as regarded the purchase of yearlings, but he could tell, almost at a glance, whether a foal would ever come to anything or not. "Confound the boy! he can't make a mistake!" Dick would exclaim, admiringly.

He himself, however, was quite capable of making mistakes, and he made a very serious one when he fell into the habit of taking this admirable judge with him to the principal race-meetings. It was an innocent pleasure, Dick thought; and in his case it certainly was so. He did not bet, and was careful to warn his young companion solemnly against that fatal practice. Notwithstanding this admonition, Jacob did bet,—possibly that, too, was a *damnosa hereditas* which it was hard for him to resist,—and the worst of it was that he had to bet on the sly. Unluckily for him, his ventures were not only successful but were never found out; this form of gambling became a passion with him, and Mr. Herbert's prolonged absences from home afforded him opportunities of indulging in it by which he was not slow to profit. His conscience did not fail to reproach him for so doing; but self-reproach is seldom of much value as a curb.

When Jacob was nineteen years of age, Nemesis, in the shape of a disastrous Ascot week, overtook him, in company with many others of higher social position. His money was all spent, settling-day was near, and he was at his wits' end. One morning he saw Dick Herbert's check-book lying upon the library table: he hastily tore a scrap of paper out of it and scribbled thereon an imitation of that imprudent gentleman's signature which would have been more exact if his fingers had not trembled so much. How could he have supposed that so foolish a fraud would escape detection? He may have counted upon Dick's well-known carelessness in money-matters; but it is more likely that he yielded to temptation in one of those moments of terror and bewilderment which are taken into consideration by merciful jurymen when they return a verdict of 'suicide while in an unsound state of mind.' He took the check into Windsor, had it cashed by a clerk, and the very next day Mr. Herbert received a note from the manager of the bank, requesting him to call at his earliest convenience.

When Dick, in obedience to this summons, entered the manager's private room, that functionary, with a very grave face, regretted to inform him that a check for two hundred pounds,—an obvious forgery, —purporting to bear his signature, had been presented across the counter and inadvertently honored by one of the clerks. "And I am very sorry to add, Mr. Herbert, that the money was paid to the young man Stiles."

"Oh, indeed!" said Dick. "Let's have a look at it." And, after examining the paper, "So that's what you call a forgery?"

"Surely, Mr. Herbert, you must see that it is."

"Oh, no," answered Dick; "don't see it at all. Why should it be a forgery? 'R. N. Herbert,'—that's the way I always sign, isn't it?"

"Mr. Herbert, do I understand you to recognize this as your signature?" inquired the manager, solemnly.

Dick nodded; and then the manager stared at him, and he stared at the manager; and the latter said no more, but thought a good deal. "Would it not be well, Mr. Herbert, that in future we should supply you with checks made payable to Order and not to Bearer?" was his only remark, as his visitor rose.

Dick answered, "Yes, if you like," picked up the check, and rode home.

As he was dismounting from his horse he caught sight of Jacob, hailed him, led him into the library, and, producing that terrible slip of blue paper, held it up before his eyes. "Your writing, I presume?" he remarked, laconically.

The unfortunate criminal could not get out a word of reply.. His knees trembled under him, he turned pale, and a cold sweat broke out upon his forehead. Herbert had his hunting-crop in his hand.

"Jake," he said, quietly, "I'm going to give you a thrashing." And, without more ado, he caught the young man by the collar and administered the punishment alluded to with the utmost vigor of a powerful right arm.

Jacob never uttered a word or a groan. It was no nominal thrashing that was inflicted upon him; but perhaps he did not care about the pain. When it was over, he had just strength enough left to crawl away to his room and hide himself. He richly deserved all that he had got, and was let off, upon the whole, very cheaply. One must not venture to claim sympathy for a man who rewards innumerable kindnesses by forging his benefactor's name. We are all sinners, and frankly admit as much once a week, if not oftener; we do things that we ought not to do, and leave undone what we ought to do; but as for lying, thieving, and cheating—*allons donc!* such mean offences are far beneath us, and we have every right to despise those who commit them. Perhaps so; but this poor wretch was base-born, and may not have possessed our noble instincts. Possibly even for him some allowance may be made by generous minds.

Dick Herbert had a very generous mind; but there never lived a man to whom it was less possible to make allowance for certain sins. It may be that he held too exalted views of the virtue of his fellow-

creatures ; at any rate, he trusted them implicitly until they deceived him ; after which, no earthly power could induce him to trust them a second time. He had done his duty to Jacob in administering to him a lesson not likely to be forgotten. When the offender came and threw himself at his feet, in an agony of shame and remorse, he freely forgave him, saying, " We will never mention the subject again ;" and he never did mention it again. But it was no longer in his power either to esteem or to like the young fellow, nor was it in his power to hide the contempt that he felt for him. His kindness did not cease, but his friendliness did ; and Jacob, who was as sensitive as he was sharp, felt and appreciated the distinction.

Whether the above catastrophe was the making or the marring of Jacob's career must remain an open question, since no one can pronounce judgment upon what might have been. It cured him at once and forever of betting ; he made a vow, and kept it, that the ring should know him no more ; but it may be said to have spoiled his temper, which perhaps was not naturally a sweet one. His life, even when he was among his fellow-art-students, in London, was somewhat solitary ; when he was at Farndon it was completely so. He had his own rooms, and, as he showed that he preferred to shut himself up, he was not often asked to leave them. It is difficult for a man who has been soundly horsewhipped to conceal all traces of the fact ; and the servants, who had never had any love for Jacob, guessed what had happened to him. If they did not find out the exact truth, they arrived at something not very far removed from it, and gave themselves the satisfaction of sneering at him in a way which he could not resent. By one hasty, dishonorable act he had incurred permanent obloquy, and he knew it. For years the dominant idea in his mind was a sense of the cruel harshness of fate, and of the injustice which took no account of repentance. Then Miss Herbert came to live at Farndon, and it was not his good fortune to commend himself favorably to Miss Herbert, who alleged, with perfect truth, that the young man had been placed in an absurdly false position by her brother.

False or not, there was no remedy for it now. He must remain where he was until his brush should bring him in a sufficient income to enable him to set up his household elsewhere ; and even when that wished-for day came he would not be free—he never could be free—from the weight of an immense obligation. In the mean time, his conduct continued to be exemplary, and his talent was recognized by all competent judges. Ambition, of a kind, he had, but it was not a hopeful kind of ambition. He developed into a rather sullen and taciturn young man,—not a pleasant young man,—possibly even a dangerous one, it might be fancied

by the look of him. Yet his thoughts were seldom bad thoughts, only intensely bitter. His feeling towards Herbert would be difficult to define, and he certainly never attempted to define it to himself. He admired the man, he respected him; he would have loved him if things had fallen out differently. As it was, there were certain moments when he felt as if earth could afford him no greater joy than to detect his benefactor in the commission of some ignoble action. It will be perceived that poor Jacob had great natural disadvantages to contend against.

The little station of Farndon Road is only about a mile and a half from Farndon Court, and, as Dick had not been sure how soon he would be able to get away from Lord Middleborough's wedding, he had given no orders that he should be met. When he left the train, however, he found Jacob Stiles waiting for him in a dog-cart, and was a little surprised by a mark of attention which had been frequent enough in the old days, but which he had latterly ceased to look for.

"Halloo, Jake!" he said, "what brings you down here?"

"I had to go into Windsor about something," replied the other, "and I thought I might as well drive round to the station, in case you came down by this train."

"I intended to walk," said Dick; "but, since you are here, I don't mind taking a lift. No; you drive," he added, as he climbed into the dog-cart and his companion handed him the reins. "I'm going to smoke a cigarette."

Jacob did as he was requested, and drove on some little distance before saying, "I wanted to tell you that I have sold another picture." He spoke with his eyes lowered, which was a trick that he had.

"Have you?" said Dick. "Glad to hear it. I hope you got a good price."

"Yes," answered the other, "I think so. I think I got as much as it was worth."

He had a slow, somewhat deprecating method of enunciation, which, taken in conjunction with his thin, pale cheeks and his habit of holding his head low, caused strangers to think that he must either be very unhappy or be weighed down by some guilty secret,—an impression which, as we know, was tolerably correct. But for these peculiarities, he would have passed muster easily enough, having a face which was rather handsome than plain, and a well-knit, well-proportioned figure.

"The gentleman who bought that picture has given me an order for two more," he went on, "and I am to do some illustrations for the *Grosvenor Magazine*."

"Come, that's capital news. Did you drive round to tell me about it, Jake?"

The young fellow raised his eyes—they were very dark and very brilliant eyes—for the first time, and shot a quick, sidelong glance at his questioner. "I thought you would be glad to hear," he answered. He seemed as if he were going to say something more, but apparently changed his mind, and, drawing the whip gently across the horse's flanks, slightly increased the pace at which they were moving.

"By the way," observed Dick, presently, "I have got a piece of news too. I'm going to be married."

This time Jacob's eyes were opened to their utmost extent, and were turned full upon Dick's face, which remained impassive. "To be married? You?" he exclaimed. "Do you really mean it?"

"Oh, yes; I have been thinking about it for some time past. It is a Miss Lefroy; not a sister of Lady Middleborough's,—her cousin. You and she ought to become friends, I should think; for she takes a great interest in art, and paints like a professional."

Jacob smiled very slightly: he may have been thinking that neither the future Mrs. Herbert nor any other lady was at all likely to make friends with him. From dwelling so continually upon one thought, he had come to have a morbid conviction that he looked like a forger, and that everybody must suspect him of being one. Presently he said, in a formal, hesitating way, as if he were repeating a speech previously learned by heart, "I am very glad that you are going to be married at last. I hope you will be as happy as you deserve to be."

"Thanks," answered Dick, briefly. After a minute or two he asked, "Did you happen to take a look at the Electricity foal to-day?"

"Yes. I don't much fancy him myself; but Miss Herbert thinks he will be the best one we ever bred. She arrived just before luncheon. I suppose you knew she was coming?"

"No, by George! I didn't," replied Dick, looking a trifle perturbed. "The last time I heard from her she said she wouldn't be here for another fortnight. I rather suspect, you know," he went on, musingly, "that Carry won't altogether like this. In fact, I'm sure she won't like it. If you come to that, it would be ridiculous to expect her to like it."

These remarks partook so much of the nature of a soliloquy that Jacob did not feel called upon to make any response to them, and nothing more was said until they reached the hall door, where Miss Herbert, who had been out riding, happened at that moment to be dismounting from her horse.

She was a tall, dark, well-made woman, who looked both young and handsome in her riding-habit, but who, under other circumstances, was quite evidently thirty years of age. She resembled her brother in

nothing at all, except in a certain abruptness of speech, and was far less universally popular than he. Nevertheless, she had a very large acquaintance, and was said to have refused many eligible suitors. She had a considerable fortune of her own.

"Well, Carry," said Dick, as he descended from the dog-cart, "so here you are again. Where are you from last?"

He did not pay much attention to her reply, but walked up the steps beside her, and, with his usual promptitude in coming to the point, said, "I have something to tell you. I am going to be married in the course of the summer, to Hope Lefroy, the niece of the Helston Abbey man."

"As I have never set eyes on the girl," observed Miss Herbert, without any manifestation of surprise, "I can't tell whether to congratulate you or not."

"You may congratulate me. And I say, Carry, I should like you two to be friends, if you could manage it."

"I doubt whether we shall be able to manage it. Do you recollect ever to have come across a case of sisters-in-law living in the same house who were friends? I don't."

"Well, let us try to make yours an exceptional case."

They had entered the drawing-room by this time. Miss Herbert had seated herself in an arm-chair, and had laid her gloves and whip down on the tea-table at her elbow. Dick leaned with his shoulders against the mantel-piece and his hands in his pockets.

"You are bound to see a good deal of one another," he continued, "and you know, Carry, you are an infernally disagreeable woman sometimes. You don't mind my saying so, do you?"

"I am sure you would not be deterred from saying so by such a trifle as my objecting to be called infernally disagreeable."

"Ah, but you can be infernally agreeable too, if you like. I wish you would take it into your head to be agreeable to her."

"My dear Dick, I hope I am not so silly or so ill bred as to quarrel with your wife; but if you expect to see us tripping out of the dining-room after dinner with our arms twined round each other's waists, you had better prepare yourself for a disappointment. Demonstrations of that kind must be undertaken by you."

Dick laughed. "There won't be any demonstrations of that kind; don't be alarmed. We shall be a very sensible, matter-of-fact couple, and we have no intention of going in for love-making. Besides, I dare say I shall be away from home pretty often."

"Oh, you have already arranged that? If it is not an impertinent question, may I ask why you are marrying a girl with whom you are

not in love? I can understand that she may have her reasons for marrying you."

"We both have our reasons, and very good ones too. I needn't run through the list of them. I really think you will like Hope; but I won't say any more. If I praise her too much I shall probably set you against her."

"Naturally," observed Miss Herbert, and then changed the subject.

Jacob no longer dined with the family; his meals were served to him by reluctant servants in his own sitting-room up-stairs,—another painful incident of his false position. Sometimes, however, if there was nobody staying in the house, he would make his appearance in the smoking-room at a late hour; and he did so this evening.

Dick looked up from the *Field* and nodded to him as he entered and advanced towards the fire, his cheeks somewhat pale, and the embarrassment of his manner more marked than usual. It was only after he had twice opened his lips without speaking that he managed to say,—

"I told you I had sold another picture. I have been saving up what I have earned lately, and here it is." He held out a bundle of bank-notes. "It's—it's—the two hundred pounds that I stole," he said, a sudden flush mounting to his cheek-bones as he forced himself to utter that uncompromising word.

Dick frowned, as he had a way of doing when he was distressed. "What nonsense, Jake!" he exclaimed. "I thought we had agreed not to mention that affair again. It is all over and—done with." He had been going to say "forgotten," but checked himself.

"It can never be done with for me," answered the young man, upon whom the significance of the substituted phrase was not lost. "The curse will be upon me to my dying day. If I never commit another offence against God or man, it will make no difference. It can't be helped, I suppose."

Dick was not much moved by this outburst, which struck him as exaggerated and uncalled-for. "My good fellow," he said, not very felicitously, "I don't want the money: it wasn't the loss of two hundred pounds that I cared about."

"I am quite aware of that," replied the other, bitterly; "but I hope you will take the money, all the same, to please me. It's—a wedding-present, if you like," he added, with a faint smile.

"I am very willing to accept your present, Jake, if that will make you any happier," said Dick, taking the notes and tossing them carelessly into a drawer.

Unlike the generality of rich men, he cared less about money than about any other earthly thing, and treated this considerable sum as if

it had been the merest trifle. He wanted to add something kind, but scarcely knew what to say. The pale, sullen face and the downcast eyes which refused to meet his impressed him disagreeably. The form of consolation which finally commended itself to him was not quite the best that could have been hit upon :

"Come, Jake, don't look so gloomy over it. Nobody but ourselves knows what happened three years ago, and nobody else ever will know. You have made a fresh start : go on and prosper, and, in God's name, give up worrying yourself about what can't be undone."

Jacob made some inarticulate murmur and presently went away. He had been quite prepared for his reception ; he had felt sure beforehand that Dick would never say, "Let us be friends again ;" yet he was sore and disappointed. If those few words could have been spoken, his character might even now have been altered ; but the words that he had heard were so many fresh wounds, which would smart for weeks and months to come, and might not improbably poison his sick mind beyond hope of cure, as the sting of an insect will sometimes prove fatal to those whose blood is in a diseased state. But how was a straightforward, plain-dealing fellow like Dick Herbert to understand all this ?

CHAPTER XIV.

MRS. PIERPOINT.

ONE afternoon, some weeks after the announcement of Hope's engagement to Mr. Herbert, a young gentleman, whose somewhat perturbed mien contrasted with the very careful accuracy of his get-up, rang at the door of one of the smallest houses in Green Street, Mayfair. He asked for Mrs. Pierpoint, was admitted, and presently groped his way into a diminutive drawing-room, darkened to suit modern requirements, and a little overcrowded with the Satsuma and Kioto ware, the old silver and enamels and miniatures, which are the outward evidences of modern taste.

Behind a tea-table in a corner of the diminutive drawing-room sat a diminutive lady, who immediately said, "I know what is the matter. You have heard that your flame is going to be married, and you have come to tell me that it is all my fault."

"And so it is your fault," Captain Cunningham declared, dropping into a low chair and casting his hat away from him with the air of one to whom glossy hats could henceforward be neither a care nor a consolation. "If it hadn't been for you, this would never have happened."

"If I could think so," remarked Mrs. Pierpoint, "I should be able to flatter myself that I had not lived altogether in vain; but I am afraid I must not claim all that credit. The utmost that I have done has been to save you from getting into one more stupid scrape."

Mrs. Pierpoint had been for some years Bertie Cunningham's friend, confidante, and adviser. Her age was nearer forty than thirty; but she had preserved her girlish figure and as much as could be expected of the beauty for which she had once been famous. Time could not mar the perfect profile formed by that low brow, that little Greek nose, that short upper lip and rounded chin. Some lines, it is true, showed themselves about the mouth and eyes, and the complexion was no longer what it had been; but the abundant brown hair was as yet unstreaked with gray, only the gold having faded out of it. She was a bright, vivacious woman, who liked hunting in winter, and society in spring, and yachting in summer, and Bertie Cunningham all the year round. Some people were pleased to say disagreeable things about her; but, as these things were not true, there is no need to dwell upon them. She had a husband with whom she managed to live on terms of amity, though there had been a time when she had believed that this would be impossible to her. Many things are found possible which do not appear so at first sight. Mrs. Pierpoint had learned to shut her eyes to what she did not wish to see, to accept what there was no satisfactory mode of escape from, and to conceal any sufferings that she may have felt from a world which dislikes nothing so much as the contemplation of suffering. It is probable that her moral standard was not a very exalted one; but she was a brave, kind-hearted little soul, who tried to do her duty according to her lights, and spoke evil of neither man nor woman.

"If it hadn't been for you," Bertie Cunningham went on, reproachfully, "I should have got those people to ask me down to Helston at Christmas. You know I should."

"And afterwards?"

"Afterwards?—*afterwards!* Well, I should have seen her, and she wouldn't have gone and engaged herself to this fellow; that's all. Oh, you may call me conceited if you like; I don't care. I'm much too miserable to care what I am called. Herbert, of all men! She can't possibly love him, you know. Now, don't go and say that she does."

"Would it be any comfort to you to think that she did?"

"Yes,—no,—I don't know. I'm beyond reach of comfort. You don't understand what it is; you're so awfully stony-hearted. I should just like to see you desperately, miserably in love with somebody!"

"I fancy that I have outlived the power; but thank you all the same. I have seen you in that condition once or twice before, and I don't feel much alarmed about you. You'll be all right again in a few weeks."

"That is a most horrid unfriendly thing to say," cried Cunningham, "besides being perfectly untrue. You never in your life saw me in love before. Some fancies I may have had,—there's nothing to laugh at,—I say, I may have had a passing fancy or two; but nothing in the least like this. This is the real thing, and I shall never get over it."

"Do you think you will die of it, then? Have a cup of tea in the mean time."

"I said nothing about dying," returned the young man, with some asperity; "I said I should never get over it; and I never shall. If I were talking to anybody but you, I should say that my heart was broken; but I won't say so to you, because as a matter of course you would begin to laugh. You *are* laughing already. Well, I suppose there must be something killingly funny in the suffering of a friend, since it amuses you so much; but I don't quite see the joke myself."

"I am not laughing," said the little lady, who indeed had only smiled. "I am really sorry for you, and I quite believe that it hurts for the moment; only I can't pretend to regret Miss Lefroy's engagement. You know as well as I do that you never could have married her, and therefore——"

"Oh, yes; that's the way you kept going on all the winter. I wish to heaven I hadn't listened to you!"

"Do you know that you are becoming rather rude? But never mind; I didn't expect gratitude. What I was going to say was that, as you could not have afforded to marry Miss Lefroy yourself, it really cannot signify much to you whom she marries or when she marries. To be sure," added Mrs. Pierpoint, thoughtfully, "I would rather have heard that she was engaged to any other man than Mr. Herbert. It may lead to complications."

"What complications?" Cunningham asked.

"You know what I mean. I am afraid you will be apt to make love to the wife when you ought to be making love to the sister."

Cunningham groaned. "I wish you were not so determined to marry me to Miss Herbert! I am not going to marry her; I am not going to marry at all. Why on earth should I?"

"Because it is good for you. Because you want money; because Carry Herbert is by far the best-looking heiress that I know, and because you really did like her very much not so long ago."

"Like her!—oh, yes, I liked her well enough; but that was before

I saw Hope—Miss Lefroy, I mean. Everything is changed now, and there is only one woman in the world whom I could possibly marry. I say, do you believe Dick Herbert is in love with her?"

"I know nothing about it, but I presume so. According to you, her charms are sufficient to account for his being in love with her."

"Yes; but I always imagined that Herbert was a regular woman-hater, and he gave out ever so long ago that he didn't mean to marry. I suspect Lady Jane has made up the match."

Mrs. Pierpoint was beginning, "If she has, it is much to her credit——" when Mr. Francis was announced, and she rose to shake hands with the new arrival. "We were just talking about your friend Mr. Herbert," she remarked.

"Were you?" said Francis. "Then let us talk about something else."

"After that, we certainly can't talk about anything else until you have explained yourself. Don't you approve of his marriage?"

"Does anybody ever approve of the marriage of his best friend? Isn't it a well-known fact that the chances are twenty to one in favor of his best friend's wife hating him like poison? In this instance the chances may safely be counted as fifty to one, because the only time that I ever spoke to Miss Lefroy I was happily inspired to tell her that a woman who married poor Dick from worldly motives would infallibly make him and herself miserable."

"She is marrying him from worldly motives, then?"

"Judging by the spirit in which she received my remarks, I should imagine that she was; but I am not in Miss Lefroy's secrets. I shall buy a very nice wedding-present for Dick; I shall see him through on the fatal day and then bid him a tearful farewell. I give him eighteen months to repent of his bargain and return to me in sackcloth and ashes. That would bring us to just about the proper time of year for the big game in Abyssinia."

"You are indeed a friend of the right sort. And what is Mrs. Herbert to do when you go after the big game in Abyssinia?"

"Mrs. Herbert, I take it, will amuse herself with little games in England. I don't wish to be the prophet of evil; I may be quite wrong, and they may turn out the happiest couple under the sun; but I have opinions of my own upon the subject of matrimony in general and of Dick Herbert as a married man in particular."

He had views, which he was rather fond of unfolding, upon most subjects, and perhaps he would have been willing to state his matrimonial views now; but it was already past six o'clock, and other visitors, before whom such subjects could not conveniently be discussed, began

to drop in, one by one, until the little room was almost choked with them.

Among the latest arrivals was Miss Herbert, who was welcomed by Mrs. Pierpoint with that peculiarly affectionate cordiality which women are wont to display towards another of their sex in the presence of the man to whom they desire to marry her. Why they should behave in this manner it is not easy to discover; for the man, unless he is very dull indeed, sees and understands it all, and, as a general thing, it makes him both uncomfortable and obstinate. It is not everybody who, like Bertie Cunningham, is prepared for all kinds of feminine stratagems and is confident of his own power to resist them.

That experienced youth knew quite well that a chair close to his would be found for Miss Herbert, and he also had good grounds for believing that Miss Herbert had a crow to pluck with him; but he did not allow these things to disturb his equanimity. He got her a cup of tea, resumed his seat, smiled pleasantly, and waited for her to begin the attack. She looked very handsome in that subdued light, and, broken-hearted though he was, it was always agreeable to him to contemplate a handsome woman. The clouds which had gathered upon her brow when she first caught sight of him began to disperse as she returned his gaze.

"Captain Cunningham," said she, "how ought one to treat a correspondent who never answers one's letters?"

"Go on writing to him till he does answer, I should think," replied Bertie, promptly.

"That might become monotonous. Perhaps a simpler plan would be to give up writing to him altogether."

"I can't help fancying," said Bertie, "that these observations are meant to apply in some mysterious way to me. If so, I can only say that that is the plan which you have adopted. I haven't had a letter from you for a very long time; but I am sure I answered every time that you wrote. If you didn't hear, it must have been the fault of that disgraceful post-office, which is always mislaying my correspondence. I mean to make a formal complaint to the Postmaster-General about it one of these days."

Miss Herbert smiled. Perhaps she believed him; perhaps she only wanted to believe him. He was bending forward, his elbow resting on his knees, and was looking up into her face with those innocent dark-blue eyes which many a woman before her had found irresistible. The most absurd of all the illusions that we cherish are those which we know to be illusions; but it not unfrequently happens that these are just the ones with which we are most unwilling to part.

Miss Herbert drank her tea silently; the smile was still hovering about her lips as she handed the empty cup to her neighbor. In general, her voice, if not exactly harsh, was hard; but nothing could have been gentler than the intonation with which her next words were spoken: "I wonder whether you will take the trouble to come and see me sometimes, now that I am in London."

"Of course I will," Bertie answered. "Where are you staying?"

She gave him one of her cards. "Dick has taken a house for the season," she said. "I suppose you have heard about poor Dick?"

The young man winced slightly. "Yes, I've heard. What in the world is he doing it for?"

"Really, that is more than I can tell you. There appears to be no pretence of affection on either side."

"I knew it!" exclaimed Bertie, off his guard. "I was certain that there couldn't be anything of the kind!"

"Why were you so certain?" asked Miss Herbert, suspiciously. "Are you acquainted with the girl?"

"Well, yes; just acquainted," answered the other, recollecting himself. "That is, I have met her twice in my life. It didn't strike me that she was at all in Dick's style. This really ought not to be allowed to go on, you know."

Miss Herbert laughed. "If you think that Dick can be prevented from doing anything that he has made up his mind to do, you must have had very few opportunities of studying his character. After all, why should it not be allowed to go on? It is very unlikely that he will live and die a bachelor, and I don't know that Miss Lefroy will not suit him as well as anybody else. I was introduced to her yesterday, and I thought her a very decent sort of person."

A decent sort of person! Bertie stroked his nascent moustache, and held his tongue with some difficulty. He valued peace too much to put the thoughts that were in him into words; but he was not sorry that the conversation at this juncture became general. When Miss Herbert took her leave he had recovered himself sufficiently to bestow that slight pressure upon her fingers which he supposed that she expected.

As soon as he and Mrs. Pierpoint were once more alone, the latter remarked, dryly, "I am glad to see that you are still capable of making love to a lady who has the merit of being marriageable."

"You call that a merit! Besides, I didn't make love to her at all: how can you say such things? I have never made love to her."

"Oh!"

"Well, I am speaking the truth. I know what it will be: some

fine day you will manage to get me into such a position that I shall be obliged to propose to Miss Herbert or some other heiress, and then I shall be nicely caught!"

"You must acknowledge that, if I have anything to do with the catching, I shall at least be disinterested. You heard what Mr. Francis said just now about the wives of one's best friends, and I suppose the same rule applies to the husbands. This is a peculiarly hard case, since both you and Carry Herbert are friends of mine. I wonder whether you will both show me the cold shoulder as soon as you are married."

"I can't tell what she might do," said Cunningham; "but I can answer for myself. Cold shoulder wouldn't be the word. If ever you bring such a thing about, my implacable resentment shall pursue you all the days of your mortal life."

"This is very sad and very discouraging," said Mrs. Pierpoint; "but I think I will take my chance all the same. Perhaps you won't hate me; you may even live to thank me—who knows?"

CHAPTER XV.

HOPE DOES HER DUTY.

SPRING had passed imperceptibly into summer; the trees in Eaton Square were as green as London trees can contrive to be; the season was in full swing; the ceaseless turmoil of the vast city had become slightly increased in one of its quarters; a few of its inhabitants were spending hundreds and thousands of pounds upon entertainments which afforded no very keen delight to anybody; others were dying of hunger in garrets; at Westminster statesmen and would-be statesmen were calling one another bad names and occasionally doing a little business. That astonishing mixture of tragedy and farce which goes by the name of life, and which, from force of habit, none of us find astonishing, was, in short, being enacted as usual; and the circumstance that a single individual among those millions had rather rashly engaged herself to marry a man whom she did not love was, doubtless, trivial enough. What can it matter whether one atom in the swarm lives or dies, is happy or unhappy? Since, however, all is relative, since the world in which we dwell is but a speck in the immensity of space, and since it and we might be extinguished to-morrow without even a momentary cessation of the music of the spheres, it is evident that we have only to apply the same theory upon a somewhat larger scale in order to con-

vince ourselves that nothing which has ever happened upon the surface of this planet is of any consequence whatsoever,—a proposition which seems too bold to be gulped down by mortal swallow. And so we return to the comforting conclusion that small things are just as important as great, and that Hope Lefroy's destiny was at least of supreme consequence to herself.

There were moments when she felt it to be so; but for the most part she allowed herself to float down the stream of fate, not without a restful sense of relief in the thought that her struggles against the current were ended. Herbert came to see her from time to time,—not by any means every day; Gertrude endeavored, with more or less of success, to interest her in the purchase of her trousseau; Lady Jane purred over her contentedly; the more distant members of the Lefroy clan came to offer their felicitations and their wedding-gifts; the days slipped away somehow or other, and were not such bad days, taking them all in all. She went as little as possible into the world, the comparative recency of her father's death giving her an excuse for declining invitations; but she could hardly refuse to be present at her aunt's annual ball, and it was upon that occasion that she encountered Captain Cunningham for the first time since her engagement.

It must be confessed that the sight of the young guardsman agitated her a little for a moment; he himself was agitated, and possibly did not try very hard to veil his agitation. But it was rather her memory than her heart that was stirred, and she speedily regained her self-possession. "No, thanks," she said, in answer to his immediate request: "I am not going to dance to-night."

"Oh, but just once,—for the sake of old times," he pleaded.

"Well, perhaps once," she answered, hesitatingly. "But not now; later in the evening, if you're disengaged then." And with that she turned away.

After all, why should she not have just one last dance? Without quite knowing it, she looked forward to her marriage in much the same way that many people look forward to death,—as the end of everything, a huge barrier, beyond which there may or may not be some new kind of happiness, but surely no renewal of dancing or laughter or other frivolous delights.

Cunningham was too adroit, or too much engaged, to claim the promised dance before two o'clock in the morning, the consequence of which was that he was awaited with some little impatience. He looked sad and interesting; he said very little, but placed his arm round his partner's waist, and as she was whirled away into the throng it seemed to her for an instant as if careless youth had come back, and all the

events of the past year might be forgotten, and she might fancy herself at her first ball again.

An insignificant circumstance interfered with the continuance of this illusion. The house in which Hope had first been introduced to London society had been a very large one, whereas that in Eaton Square was only of moderate size. In so restricted a space collisions could with difficulty be avoided, and anything like the poetry of motion was quite unattainable. After making the circuit of the room once, Hope paused, and, disengaging herself from her partner, declared, with a touch of petulance, that it was out of the question to dance in the midst of such a rabble. "We may as well sit down," she said, and suited the action to the word.

"Ah!" sighed Cunningham, as he followed her example, "if we could only go back to this time last year!"

"That is just what I was thinking: it seems so much more than a year ago!"

"I suppose it wouldn't make much difference if we could," the young man said, with another sigh. "What must be will be. Only, so long as things haven't actually happened, it always seems as if other things might be possible, don't you know?"

To this incoherent sentiment Hope made no reply, and he continued: "I wonder what we shall be doing this time next year. Probably I shall be wishing I could have this evening back again. Next year you will be Mrs. Herbert, and perhaps your husband won't let you dance."

"I don't think Mr. Herbert is likely to lay any prohibitions upon me," answered Hope, coldly.

She was not pleased with him for alluding to her marriage. There are certain reticences for which women are always grateful, and she had credited Cunningham with some delicacy in that he had refrained from offering her any empty congratulations. Of course he must suspect what her motives for marrying were, and, as he was no relation of hers, of course he could see no cause for rejoicing in such a match. But he might have let the subject alone.

Fortunately, he did not seem inclined to pursue it. His next words were, "Do you remember that day last winter when I met you in the Park?"

"Quite well," answered Hope.

"And I told you I should get your people to ask me down to Helston at Christmas. How I wish I had!"

"We should all have been glad to see you; but most likely you were better amused hunting in Leicestershire with your friend Mrs. Pierpoint."

"How did you know that I was there?" asked the young man, in some astonishment.

"Everything is known. Did you wish it to remain a secret?"

"Oh, dear, no! there is no secret about it. Pierpoint told me I could ride his horses while he was away, so I went down to Melton for a few weeks and stayed with a cousin of mine. Only I thought, from the way you spoke—that is, I hope you know that I would a thousand times rather have been at Helston than in Leicestershire."

"Really? I can't quite understand why."

But in truth she did understand what he meant her to infer; and, if she had not, the eloquent expression which he now threw into his eyes would have enlightened her. This knowledge, however, did not cause her heart to beat any the faster. Captain Cunningham might possibly, under different conditions, have become something to her; but he was nothing to her now; she was quite sure of that; nor did she believe much in his sincerity. No doubt the impassioned gaze with which she was at that moment being honored had been directed at half a dozen sets of features in the course of the evening. But there she did him an injustice. Had he been less seriously in love with her, he would not have hesitated to be a good deal more explicit; but Hope was not to him what other women were, and, since he could no more ask her to throw Herbert over and marry him than he could propose to a princess of the blood royal, he heroically refrained from going beyond hints and glances; which, according to his code, was no small concession to the behests of duty.

These meetings with no response, the conversation gradually languished. Neither he nor she felt altogether at ease; the interview was a disappointment to both of them, and Hope was not sorry when Herbert lounged up to her side and put an end to it. With Herbert she did feel at ease: never was there a less exacting *fiancé*. If she happened to be in a talkative mood, he sat and listened to her with apparent pleasure; if, on the other hand, she preferred to remain silent, that seemed to suit him equally well. She told herself a dozen times a day that she ought to be very thankful, and that she never could have got on so smoothly with any one else in the world. It was necessary that she should tell herself this, because every now and then he provoked her to an extent for which she was puzzled to account; and indeed, although storms are not to be desired, there are few tempers capable of holding out against a perpetual equatorial calm.

There was no disturbing Dick Herbert's good humor: otherwise he might have been made a little anxious by the fits of nervous irritability to which Hope became subject as the day of her marriage drew nearer.

"Do you realize what you are doing?" she asked him suddenly, once; "do you know that you are marrying a woman who has the makings of a termagant in her?"

He smiled, and replied that he was willing to run that risk.

On another occasion she besought him to tell her whether he did not in his heart believe it to be wicked to marry without love. "It must be wicked!—I am sure it must be! Though I don't think the Bible says anything about it."

"Neither the Bible nor I have a word to say against the practice," Dick answered.

"But perhaps you think it wrong, though you don't say so. Wouldn't you like to be off your bargain? Come!—there is still time."

"Well, hardly, is there? Think of the feelings of your family."

Hope burst into a hysterical laugh. "What *would* they do to me! It would be almost worth while to break the engagement off, if only for the sake of passing through such a startling experience. But of course I am talking nonsense," she added, becoming grave again. "I should never have the moral courage to retreat now: perhaps if I had had any moral courage I should never have advanced. It has all been your doing from first to last."

"I don't mind accepting the entire responsibility," said Dick.

That was the worst of him: he didn't mind anything. It was this unreasonable complaint that Hope inwardly formulated against a man who let her do exactly what she pleased now, and who would in all probability continue to let her do what she pleased hereafter. Unquestionably such a treasure was thrown away upon her; and so, in truth, her friends appeared to think. When they came to congratulate her, they one and all expatiated upon Dick's good qualities, and had an unflattering way of implying that she was a great deal more lucky than she deserved to be. Even Mills, who could not be accused of undervaluing her former mistress, was abundantly satisfied with the match, and spoke of Mr. Herbert in terms of such extravagant, not to say ignorant, eulogy that Hope could not help calling attention to one small defect of his. "He is sixteen years older than I am, you know, Mills."

"And a very good thing, too, Miss Hope. I don't feel no confidence in young men, nor yet no respect for 'em," said Mrs. Mills, whose own husband was considerably her junior. "What you want," she went on, "is somebody to take care of you; and that Mr. Herbert will do. I'd a deal sooner it was him than the other."

"What other?" Hope inquired.

"Why, him as you walked with that day in the Park, my dear. I

was took with him at first, I don't deny, for I have always been partial to good looks, having none myself; but when I come to think it over, I didn't feel so sure of him. No, my dear, it's best as it is, you may depend."

"The gentleman whom you speak of never asked me to marry him," said Hope; "and no doubt everything that happens is always for the best. At all events, you will be a gainer, you poor old Mills, for you won't be dragged away from your duties any more now to sit in artists' studios all the morning."

"The Lord be praised for that!" ejaculated Mills, piously. "Not that I grudged the time, as well you know, Miss Hope; but, dear me! it wasn't the right thing at all for a young lady like you to be going to such places. I felt so all along, though it wasn't for me to speak; and that there Mr. Tristram, I believe he thought the same as I did."

"Very likely," answered Hope.

She had no doubt that Tristram, in common with everybody else, held that opinion. In her inexperience she had imagined that it might possibly be the right thing to earn her own bread; but evidently this was not so. The right thing was to remain, by hook or by crook, in the station to which she had been born; the right thing was to be rich. If riches did not chance in her case to be synonymous with bliss, that was her own fault. The consciousness of duty performed should be sufficient for all well-ordered minds.

It was in the very last days of her spinsterhood that Hope held the above colloquy with Mills. She had gone to Henrietta Street to take leave of her old nurse and her old rooms, and had contemplated continuing her pilgrimage to South Kensington in order to take leave also of her old master. But now she gave up that idea. What would be the good? What pleasure could there be in hearing conventionalities from the unconventional Tristram? These might more appropriately be spoken after the ceremony, to which he had been invited and at which she presumed that he would be present. So she went straight back to Eaton Square and shed a few tears in private.

No modern Joshua being at hand to arrest the remorseless progress of time, the sun rose punctually at 4.30 A.M. on Hope's wedding-morning, to pursue his wonted course of shining upon the just and upon the unjust, among the former class of which persons might surely be included a young woman whose faltering steps had led her at last into what she believed to be the path of duty. When he sank once more beneath the horizon-line, Hope Lefroy had become Mrs. Herbert, and Lady Jane, resting from her labors, breathed a fervent thanksgiving that the proceedings of the day had passed off without a hitch.

The good lady had not felt quite sure that there would be no hitch ; but that numbness of the whole nervous system which is often brought about by a crisis, and which is no bad substitute for courage, enabled Hope to bear herself from first to last with the most creditable composure. Her wedding was only a little less magnificent than that of her cousin had been. Dukes and duchesses were not quite so well represented at it, and the reporters of the daily papers appeared at the church in somewhat diminished numbers ; but the requisite bishop was not lacking, nor had any expense been spared in the way of floral decoration. Dick Herbert, in a new suit of clothes, got through his task with ease and distinction, supported by the dissatisfied Francis, who had assumed a smiling mien in spite of his dissatisfaction. The only thing that Hope afterwards remembered to have seen during the service was Tristram's shaggy head rising above a sea of others ; and she noticed that he was studying the scene with a pensive, melancholy air, as if thinking that a picture might possibly be made out of it. But it was certain that Tristram would never paint anything so hopelessly commonplace as a fashionable wedding. He said something to her—she did not clearly understand what—when he shook hands with her after the rite was concluded. There were so many people to be shaken hands with, and so many meaningless words to be listened to !

However, the ordeal did not last long. Hope, placing herself in the hands of the new maid who had been engaged for her, exchanged her bridal array for a travelling-dress ; immediately after which she seemed to wake out of a trance, and found that she was seated beside her husband in a brougham, moving rapidly towards the station, whence they were to depart for Folkestone and the Continent.

She faced round upon him with quivering lips and dilated eyes. "Now," she exclaimed, "I hope you are satisfied !"

"It seemed the best thing to do," he answered, calmly.

Then she turned away, looking out of the window, and did not speak again until the short drive was at an end.

Gertrude, when the company had dispersed, was moved by curiosity to put an indiscreet question to her mother : "Mamma, do you think they will be happy, those two ?"

"They have everything to make them so," Lady Jane declared, boldly.

"Not quite everything, have they ? I suppose he must be fond of her ; but she has said from the beginning that she is not the least in love with him. It seems rather dreadful ! I hope I shall not marry a man whom I don't care for."

"I sincerely hope not, my dear," said Lady Jane : "I should never

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venture to advise any one to do that. And yet love is not so absolutely essential as young people are apt to think. I have known many instances in which people who have married from—other motives have got on very well.” She sighed faintly. Perhaps she did not speak upon the subject without some personal knowledge of it to guide her. “At all events,” she concluded, cheerfully, “it is a thousand times better for Hope to be living at Farndon, and mixing in the society to which she has been accustomed, than masquerading about London in the disguise of a female artist.”

Mr. Lefroy walked down to his club, where he met several of his late guests. “Well, Lefroy,” said one of them, “you look very beaming. Has the Birmingham Caucus been swallowed up by an earthquake?”

“No,” answered Mr. Lefroy; “but I’ve married my niece to one of the best fellows that ever stepped.”

“Quite so; but you might have married her to anybody, for that matter. To my mind, hers is far and away the most beautiful face that has been seen in London this year.”

“Well, yes,” assented Mr. Lefroy. “Oh, yes, she is perfect to look at, certainly: still, I don’t mind admitting to you that I’m glad to get her off my hands. No vice, you understand; but awkward to drive,—very awkward to drive.”

“And you think she’ll go steadier in double harness, eh?”

“I haven’t a doubt of it. She’ll go steady enough now; no more shying or bolting. Only I’m not sure—this is strictly between ourselves, of course—I’m not *quite* sure that I should care to change places with Dick Herbert.”

CHAPTER XVI.

A WELCOME.

FORTUNATELY for its occupants, Farndon Court has never been a show-place; but that does not prevent it from being one of the most charming houses in Berkshire. The original structure, which certain prints still extant depict as a somewhat gloomy mansion of the Jacobean style, was burnt to the ground in the early part of the present century, and Dick Herbert’s father, then a young man who had recently returned from making the grand tour, had it replaced upon another site, by as near a reproduction as his architect could achieve or would consent to of a Renaissance French château, with steep roofs, jutting

wings, and high windows which at a later period were fitted with plate-glass. The edifice has been a good deal criticised, but no one has ever thought of disputing the beauty of its position. It stands on an eminence, approached from the north by a long, straight avenue, while on the south (towards which quarter the windows of the principal reception-rooms look) is a broad terrace, terminated by a stone balustrade, some ten feet beneath which are level lawns and geometrically-designed flower-beds, according well enough with the formal character of the building. From the limit of these the ground falls gently to the shores of a lake of respectable size, and beyond that woods stretch away as far as the eye can reach. From every side, indeed, of this happily-placed dwelling an undulating sea of greenery extends into the far misty distance. All the charm of woodland scenery is there, without that sense of oppression which the too near neighborhood of trees is apt to convey. The park is not large, nor, for the matter of that, is the entire property a very extensive one; but it has the appearance of being boundless, no line of demarcation being perceptible at the points where it touches Windsor Forest.

As for the interior of the house, it was comfortable, though hardly what in these days would be considered pretty or capable of being rendered so. The rooms were spacious and lofty, but of course lacked those nooks and corners upon which we have learned to set so high a value; and the furniture, which had been purchased at an epoch when gilding, damask, and huge mirrors were held to exhaust the resources of art and luxury, was—as Dick's friends had frequently informed him—meretricious in the last degree. By the time that Dick had decided to give his home a mistress it had become extremely shabby into the bargain, and, as he had the best reasons for distrusting his own taste in such matters, he thought he could not do more wisely than summon a celebrated upholsterer, turn him loose in the house, and briefly instruct him to "do it up and make it decent in a couple of months."

The celebrated upholsterer accepted the commission with glee. He came down from London, accompanied by his myrmidons, and carried out his orders in a thoroughly painstaking and conscientious manner. He did the house up and made it decent according to his notions, which were those of the most modern school, and did not allow himself to be hampered by any slavish adherence to congruity. The abomination of gilding was promptly reduced; the walls became clothed, some in tapestry, some in an imitation of stamped leather, others in papers of a sombre hue; an immense consignment of old oak—or, at any rate, of oak which seemed to be old—arrived and was distributed about the premises; a pleasing irregularity displayed itself in the arrangement

of the brackets which supported the late Mr. Herbert's collection of old Chelsea and Bow ; all the doors were taken off their hinges, and others, made of solid wood, were put in their place. With those immense windows, there was no excluding the light ; but the best that could be done with heavy curtains was done. Then the upholsterer rested from his labors, feeling that he had performed his duty, and in due course sent in an account which caused even Dick Herbert to purse up his lips and whistle.

Late one afternoon towards the end of September Miss Herbert was pacing pensively up and down the terrace already alluded to. She had arrived the day before, had inspected, with elevated eyebrows and a mental appraisal of the cost, the transformation effected within-doors, and she was now awaiting the owner and his bride, whose home-coming was expected to take place that evening. It has been said of an eminent statesman that he possesses every virtue except that of resignation. Of Miss Herbert it was never said that she possessed every virtue ; but from the list of those that she did possess the same deduction would assuredly have had to be made. Perhaps she was one of those persons who are born to rule : she had, at all events, been accustomed to rule over Farndon for a long time, and the prospect of resigning her authority was not agreeable to her.

Her musings as she gazed out at the yellowing woods and the mists rising from the lake were in keeping with the melancholy that belonged to the season and the hour. She herself was entering upon the autumn of life, and there were moments when she was painfully aware of the fact. Looking back upon the bygone spring- and summer-time, she felt that she had not made hay while the sun shone, or that at least she had made it after a fashion which had left her nothing to show in the shape of crop. She had certainly amused herself very well during a considerable number of years, if that could be called making hay. When she had been young and handsome and an heiress, she had found the world at her feet, and, finding it there, had been unable to resist the temptation to kick it. She had had many suitors, whom she had fooled to the top of their bent and had dismissed, without scruple or mercy, as soon as they began to weary her. Whilst she walked on the terrace at Farndon that September evening, she was thinking to herself, as the generality of us think, that if she could only take a fresh start and begin life over again she would act in quite another way ; but to take a fresh start was impossible, because, although she was still handsome and still an heiress, she was no longer young ; and nobody knew better than Miss Herbert that that made all the difference. It had suited her to assume that those lovers of hers had been attracted to her originally

by mercenary motives. If she had succeeded in capturing their affections, and if they had suffered when she jilted them, that was her fair revenge, and they had no business to complain. But now she was inclined to be less severe in her judgment of them, having a reason of her own for sympathizing with all lovers, and especially with disappointed ones. Not one of those men had ever touched her heart; she had been wont to assure them that she really had no heart to be touched, and had almost believed that she was speaking the truth in so assuring them. It was not until her beauty was already on the wane that, in an evil hour, she had encountered Bertie Cunningham, and had learned that neither years nor experience nor a sceptical temperament are any sort of protection against the malady to which all mortals are liable.

That amiable, selfish, and pleasure-loving young man had played the part of Nemesis with a success of which he was in no wise conscious. He had flirted with Carry Herbert; he had admired her greatly at first; there had been a moment when—his finances being in a terribly disordered condition—he had been upon the verge of proposing to her; but a lucky week at Newmarket had set him on his legs again, and he had decided to keep his liberty. All this Miss Herbert knew and understood perfectly well. She was furious with herself for loving this boy as she did; her reason told her that her love was not, perhaps could not be, returned; yet to give up hope and let him go was more than she could accomplish. Sometimes she cheated herself into thinking that he had loved her once; sometimes she cherished the still more absurd delusion that she might be able to make him love her yet. But what tortured her most of all was her knowledge that she would accept him without hesitation even though he should tell her in so many words that it was her money, not herself, that he desired.

An admission of that kind is not a pleasant one for a proud woman to have to make to herself, and it is hardly surprising that at the age of two-and-thirty Miss Herbert should have been a soured and disappointed woman as well as a proud one. Her brother's marriage was a serious vexation to her. She had never played second fiddle, and could neither imagine herself in that position nor see any way of escape from it. Had she been able to feel as she had felt a year or two back, the matter would have been simple enough. She would have married A or B (there was still more than one such person available) and migrated to another little kingdom. But now she shuddered at the bare thought of what would formerly have seemed to her the most natural solution of the difficulty. Perhaps the one comfort remaining to her was the right which she felt to despise all those who married for the sake of money or convenience. In this category she considered that she was

justified in including Hope,—which was more or less of a special comfort to her.

"Of course we shall detest each other," she muttered, standing out there among the falling leaves. "If Dick goes off and she is left here, as she probably will be before long, we must try to keep the house full of people. A prolonged *tête-à-tête* would be insupportable."

Somebody who was crossing the lawn with a hurried step caught sight of her at this moment, paused irresolutely, raised his hat, and passed on. But she stopped him with a somewhat imperious movement of her hand. "How do you do, Stiles?" she said (she always addressed him in this way, as if he had been a servant, and it was one of several reasons that he had for disliking her). "I did not know that you were in the house."

"I have been here for a week, Miss Herbert," answered Jacob. (It was his habit to call her "Miss Herbert" instead of "Ma'am," and that was one reason, among others, why she disliked him.)

"Oh, really? And why are you not down at the station, cheering and throwing up your hat?"

"I did not wish to put myself forward," replied Jacob. "I heard that some of the tenants were to go down to the station on horse-back," he added.

"Well, you are a tenant—of a kind, are you not? I should have thought you would have felt bound to give vent to your joy like the others. But perhaps you don't rejoice; perhaps your tenancy is coming to an end."

Jacob glanced quickly at the clear-cut features above him, which wore a slightly derisive expression. "Nothing has been said to me," he answered, hesitatingly. "Did—did Mr. Herbert speak to you about it?"

"Oh, no; only there are going to be changes, and, as you are aware, I myself have always considered your position a very equivocal one."

"I believe that you always have, Miss Herbert."

"And it seems not unlikely that the new mistress of the house may wish to make a fresh arrangement of rooms,—the more so as she is by way of being an artist and will probably require a studio of some kind."

"I can leave at any moment," Jacob said, with a faint flush on his cheeks.

"I don't know that you will be required to leave, Stiles. Mrs. Herbert may take a liking to you; only, if I were in your place I should be prepared for the chance of her doing the reverse. A new mistress is apt to be a rather arbitrary sort of person."

"I should think," observed Jacob,—“very likely I may be wrong,—but I should think that she would be guided in most things by her husband's wishes.”

“I should think—and it is not so very likely that I am wrong—that she would be guided entirely by her own inclinations.”

“May I ask, Miss Herbert,” inquired Jacob, with a great show of deference, “whether you have met this lady?”

“Of course I have met her.”

“And is she—er——?”

“Pretty? Oh, yes, she is pretty.”

“I see,” said Jacob, demurely, with his eyes cast down as usual.

There are few things more disagreeable than sitting down inadvertently upon a wasps'-nest. It was a sensation of this kind that Miss Herbert experienced when the above discreet insinuation reached her ears. It was beneath her dignity to take any notice of it, and indeed it had been beneath her dignity (if she had thought of that in time) to speak about her sister-in-law at all to this low-born young man; but the truth was that she had stopped him because, being thoroughly out of temper with the world at large, she had longed to say something disagreeable to somebody. Now, it is always a mistake to say disagreeable things to your inferiors; for they either hold their tongues—in which case you feel that you have been a brute—or else they have the audacity to retort, and then, if you have any respect for yourself, it is you who must remain silent. The sound of the village bells, followed by that of distant cheering, put an end to a colloquy which had lasted too long. Miss Herbert turned away and walked to the other end of the terrace, while Jacob escaped into the house.

From the spot where Miss Herbert was now standing she could, by craning her neck a little, get a glimpse of the avenue, and thus she presently became aware of the approach of a somewhat disorderly cavalcade. The form of Mr. Potter, the land-steward, could be discerned, leading the way on his roan horse; behind him jogged a throng of burly farmers, in the midst of whom was Dick Herbert, driving a mail phaeton, with his wife by his side; a considerable number of farm-laborers were keeping up with the carriage on foot, shouting lustily as they ran.

“How truly ridiculous!” exclaimed Miss Herbert, under her breath. “What idiots they look! and how poor Dick must hate it all! If I were he, I should offer them an instant reduction of rent and drinks all round to go away.”

Then, as the angle of the house hid the procession from view, “I suppose I must go and do my share of the humbug now,” she murmured;

and, passing slowly through the drawing-room and the hall, she reached the entrance just as Dick pulled up his horses and turned to make the little speech which was awaited from him. It was a very little speech : his sister listened to it from the top of the steps and was shaken with inward laughter :

"I'm awfully obliged to you fellows for giving us such a hearty welcome. So is Mrs. Herbert : she wishes me to express her thanks. We shall value very much the piece of plate which you were so kind as to present to us on our marriage. Hope to meet you all at dinner before long. These are bad times for farmers ; not particularly good ones for landlords either. But it can't be helped : so we won't say any more about it. Good-night, all of you."

After this brief sample of Dick's eloquence there was a good deal of cheering, and then the assembly dispersed,—the humbler portion of it, no doubt, getting its thirst assuaged before leaving the premises.

Miss Herbert advanced to greet the bride. "Shall I kiss her? Probably it will be expected of me." So she bent forward and just touched with her lips the cool, fresh cheek which was presented to her. Then, drawing back a little, she took a keen survey of her supplanter. "Why, the woman looks positively radiant!" was her unspoken comment. "Can she be really enamoured of Dick, after all?"

At that moment Hope certainly bore all the outward semblance of a happy bride. Her eyes were sparkling, the excitement or the fresh air had brought the color into her face, and she looked, as Miss Herbert was fain to admit, even prettier than she had looked on her wedding-day. Dick, who had stopped to say a few words to the servants, joined the two ladies before either of them had spoken, and then they all three entered the drawing-room together.

"What a pretty room!" exclaimed Hope.

A bright fire was burning in the grate; the wax candles in the sconces which had been placed between the tapestried panels shed a mellow light upon chairs, tables, curtains, and other articles of furniture, which were undoubtedly pretty in themselves, and a plentiful supply of flowers had been brought in from the hot-houses.

"I suppose it is pretty," agreed her husband, dubiously, stroking his chin, while he surveyed the achievements of the upholsterer. "It has rather a stagey sort of look to me; but I suspect that is my lack of artistic perception. Have you been over the house, Carry?"

"I have," answered Miss Herbert.

"And what do you think of it?"

"I think that I would rather you paid the bill than I."

"Oh, bother the bill!" said Dick. "My only fear is that Hope

may tell me it is all wrong. I shan't let her see more of it than I can help to-night. Suppose we go and dress for dinner now."

At dinner Miss Herbert had opportunities for gauging the affection that existed between the newly-married couple, and was compelled to abandon all her preconceived ideas upon that point. "They are nothing more nor less than a pair of lovers," she thought, not without some disgust; "and I foresee that it will be my pleasing occupation to be perpetually hiding myself lest I should be in their way." She remarked aloud, "You have made a very long honeymoon of it. Where have you been, and what have you been doing, all this time?"

"Upon my word, I don't quite know," answered Dick. "We have been dawdling about,—Switzerland, and Venice, and the Italian lakes, you know."

"Living in hotels among herds of tourists, and being dragged off every day to see sights by a courier. Weren't you bored to death?"

"Well, no," replied Dick, "I don't think so. Were we bored, Hope?"

"I was not," answered Hope, with a smile.

"You see, we were in Venice most of the time, and there were plenty of pictures for her to look at there," observed Dick, explanatorily.

But that did not account for the meaning look which Mrs. Herbert had sent across the table at her husband and which Carry had caught on its passage. Really, it was a little provoking. If these two people had married for love, why on earth could they not have said so, instead of cheating others into the belief that they merited pity and contempt? To be sure, they might still deserve both; everything depends upon the point of view; but Miss Herbert felt that if she were to be logical her stand-point must now be one of sympathy. In any case, this kind of thing was not likely to last long; and she was kind enough to give Hope an inkling of what might be anticipated as soon as they had adjourned to the drawing-room after dinner, leaving Dick to his claret and his cigarette.

"I suppose," she began, "that Dick is full of shooting-engagements, as usual."

"I have not heard of any," Hope answered.

"Perhaps he hasn't read his letters yet. Generally he is in great request at this time of year. He doesn't shoot his own coverts till later in the season. I have always tried to pay visits in the autumn, because it isn't particularly lively to be quite alone in a place like this; but of course we can ask people down to stay now."

"Shall I not be invited to go with Dick, then?" asked Hope.

Carry laughed. "Very likely you will be invited, for form's sake; but I don't think I should accept, if I were you. Women are not really wanted at those big shooting-parties, you know."

"But I don't know," said Hope: "the truth is that I know nothing at all about such things. There were plenty of women at Helston while the shooting was going on."

"Oh, Helston is another affair altogether. Shooting there isn't the serious business that it is in the houses which Dick frequents. Besides, I fancy that even the most devoted of husbands appreciates a holiday every now and then. As for Dick, he has been in the habit of doing exactly as he pleases all his life long, and he is a little bit too old to change now."

"Possibly it might please him to take me with him," suggested Hope.

At this Carry laughed again. "Oh, it might, no doubt; but if I were in your place I wouldn't make too sure of that. If you want him always to look as amiable as he did this evening, I should strongly advise you to let him have a long tether."

"I have not the slightest intention of keeping him at home against his will, or of following him about when he doesn't want me," answered Hope; "only I certainly shall not care to have visitors here during his absence. I can put up with my own company better than most people."

She spoke with apparent good humor; but the sound of her voice showed that she was slightly annoyed, and Miss Herbert thought that that allusion to her own company was probably meant to be significant.

It was perhaps just as well that Dick came in from the dining-room before any further exchange of ideas could take place between two ladies each of whom was thoroughly determined not to make the stupid mistake of quarrelling with the other.

W. E. Norris.

(To be continued.)

AUNT SUKEY.

A BITTERLY cold, marrow-piercing, blood-congealing New-England winter has sent scores of people with delicate lungs to regions where breathing is a luxury, not a penance,—among them, pretty, frail Mrs. Hawkins, who finds herself established in a large, old-fashioned plantation-house near the village of Whitman, Georgia. To sit

by an open window in December, drinking in great draughts of the deliciously balmy, pine-laden air, to walk in the sunshiny, neglected old garden and gather baskets of violets, Cape jessamines, Lamarques, Marshal Niels, and other floral treasures such as she has been in the habit of admiring in her rich neighbors' conservatories or longing for at city florists' as they lay embedded in green moss behind plate-glass windows at a dollar apiece, seems to the little lady the *ne plus ultra* of enjoyment.

It is dashed by the thought that her Charles is a lonely husband, chained to a desk the best part of each day, and walking cheerily or drearily through a strong atmospheric solution of carving-knives to the modest suburban home that somehow gets farther out in the country every day. But all the same she revels in her new surroundings.

"The house is big and quiet and comfortable; the garden is big and quiet and sunshiny; the people are big and quiet and kind. Think of being in a place where there is no snow, ice, sleet, wind, rain, noise, or dust apparently, where roses nod persistently against the window-pane, and the sun streams in a broad, beautiful sheen across the door-sill. Think what it is to get all the flannel out of your lungs and lose all the woolly tones of your voice, to cease to think perpetually of your wraps, overshoes, and umbrella, to no longer take as much care of yourself as you would of your own grandmother, to snap your fingers at draughts and doctors and get yourself quite off your mind. Think of being with people who live like aldermen and are as kind as Sisters of Charity, have never heard a strain of 'Pinafore,' and only ask thirty dollars a month for the privilege of living under the same roof. Is it not incredible? I ask myself every day if I am on this continent and in this century," she wrote home. And, truth to tell, she was in good quarters, with Southern sunshine and warmth and kindness enveloping her as in a mantle. In a few weeks a faint imitation tea-rose bloomed on the wan cheeks, she began to regain her rounded, girlish outlines, and developed an amount of energy that clamored for expression all the more for years of enforced subjugation and idleness. And then, with the infatuation of the half-cured invalid, she committed a grave imprudence. With soul intent upon millinery, she ran out in the hall one day and dragged in her largest saratoga, opened it, lifted out a heavy tray, found the white ribbon which was to adorn the bonnet she was making, and straightway dyed it crimson.

Great was the consternation of her kind hostess when she found her lying white and speechless on the floor; and the first thing done was to send for the doctor and Aunt Sukey, the two family props. Both responded promptly,—the first a pompous medical man, very ornate in

manner, imposing in his technical phrases, and capable of assuming a great variety of dignified attitudes, in which a gold-headed cane presented by a former grateful patient played an important part; the second an ex-slave, a tiny old woman, with all her features drawn to a focus, a wrinkled nose, and half-shut eyes.

"So glad you have come, Aunt Sukey!" said the lady of the house, in a cordial whisper.

"What de matter? Hamridge, you say? I knows all 'bout dat; nussed Kalline's Emma wid 'em nigh on five years, till de Lord took her inter glory," replied Aunt Sukey, in a low voice, taking off her shawl as she spoke. Limping across the room, she deposited what she called her "armbureller" in the corner, came back, and stood by the bed.

"How do you think she looks? Dreadfully pale, isn't she?" said the mistress.

"Wait till I gits my eye-specs," said Aunt Sukey, frowning, and, fishing in the depths of a huge pocket that ran down nearly to the hem of her dress, she eventually produced a pair of blue goggles, adjusted them on the end of her nose with great deliberation, and looked over them at the patient. The doctor had given his directions and gone, and, in response to the anxious looks of the little group about the bed, Aunt Sukey merely gave a kind of grunt and looked inscrutable; then, drawing up a chair, she said, "You kin go, chillun. I don't want no whisperatin' en circumferatin' goin' on in a room whar I'se called to nuss." With this she settled herself well in the arm-chair, pursed up her mouth to a rather finer point than before, gave her bandanna a slight hitch over the left ear, and took command, as bold as an admiral on his own quarter-deck.

Many days passed before Mrs. Hawkins took much interest in what was going on around her. Beyond a general impression that the affairs of her world, the sick-room, were under wise and beneficent control, she knew nothing. The thousand-and-one little things on which the comfort and often the life of a patient depend were carefully attended to. Food and medicine were administered with clock-work regularity, and she seemed to see in feverish half-dreams the figure of a queer old black woman, who might have been a kobold or a banshee or anything else that was uncanny as far as she could tell, hovering above her, curled up on the floor beside her, nodding sleepily in the big chair opposite, but always alive to her every want and movement.

Opening her eyes one night after a long and refreshing sleep, Mrs. Hawkins saw the old woman over in one corner of the room sitting by a table on which a tallow candle flared and smoked. Her spectacles

were pushed well back, her head-handkerchief drawn down to meet them, one eye was screwed up, and her mouth drawn around towards the closed eye, while with the open one she glared intently at a needle held about two feet away, at which she made various and sundry "passes" from time to time in a vain effort to force a coarse waxed thread through its eye. Presently she succeeded; her features relaxed, and, slowly picking up a garment off the floor, she began working with stiff, rheumatic old fingers, the effort to keep her eyes open sending the wrinkles in her forehead running up to the fringe of gray hair above.

"Who—who is that?" quavered Mrs. Hawkins, in a feeble attempt to account for the queer figure before her.

"Sukey, honey. You jes' turn right over and go ter sleep ag'in," said her nurse, looking up for a moment and then going on with her work.

"And who is she?" said the confused patient, half to herself.

"She's de cat's mudder," said Sukey, shortly, giving her eyes a disapproving roll towards the bed and feeling the remark a personal indignity, then, waving an enormous pair of shears towards her in order to punctuate the important truth, added, "I see yer ain't very perlite. Sick or well, reckermember dis,—manners gwine carry yer furdur 'n money."

Mrs. Hawkins was not in the habit of being called "honey" by her servants, neither was she accustomed to being criticised by them: so she resented vaguely what she conceived to be an impertinence, and wondered vaguely how she had given offence, and lay still, revolving both questions in a head that felt like a bee-hive, until she fell asleep again. Next morning she was able to examine her companion more narrowly than she had yet done. Aunt Sukey, when she had attended to all her patient's wants and propped her up skilfully on a huge, square pillow, put her hands on her hips and her head on one side as she examined her critically, and said, "You're better. De Lord's got work fur you to do here yit, and yer gwine git well." Mrs. Hawkins was about to pour out a string of questions and comments, but she was interrupted, "Hesh, chile! Yer ain't to talk. *He* said so," with a contemptuous jerk of the head in the direction of the village; "and, dough *he* dunno much, it's a mighty big fool dat ain't right onest in a lifetime."

Aunt Sukey was frequently called in to nurse the doctor's patients, and a bitter jealousy and raging contempt for him was one of the strongest sentiments that animated her.

This, with some other of Aunt Sukey's peculiarities, soon struck Mrs. Hawkins, who, knowing nothing of the genus, studied her as if she had been a curious insect under a microscope. She noticed that while Aunt

Sukey's dress was spotlessly clean it was most obtrusively patched in a dozen different places with bright bits of new calico, whose fresh tints made the garment look painfully faded by contrast.

"Poor old soul! How fearfully poor she must be! and yet how neat and industrious!" thought Mrs. Hawkins. "I wonder why she always wears the skirt of one dress and the body of another. I shall give her a nice new one when I get well. What a quizzical old face it is, and how well that towering bandanna and the white handkerchief across the breast set it off!" (Then, aloud,) "What a good nurse you are, Aunt Sukey, and how kind you've been to me!"

"There's some don' think so," replied Aunt Sukey, moving about the room, putting everything in its place, as she spoke. "But I nussed ole mistis wid ipecacetic fits fur seben years, and master wuz allus havin' de screwmatics. Ez fur dem chillun, I jes' took 'em en fotch 'em troo eberything dat cum along till dey wuz grown en married; en now dey sends fur mammy ef dey gits a pain in dey big toe, 'most. I wuz raised by a mighty 'ristocratical family, honey,' way off dar in Virginny; maybe yer know 'em? Caroline County,—our place wuz dar. Probyn's de name. No sech people 'bout hyur. Me en Miss Lucy—she dat wuz Miss Anna's ma—is de only ones uv our fam'ly dat ever wuz in dis part uv de country. Yes, dey raised me, en I stayed brung up when I got my freedom. Dere ain't a nigger in dis town now what can open de do' fur quality. I wuz tole ter open de front do' quiet as a t'ief in a watermillion-patch, en den I stan' back 'gin de wall fur let de company pass, en den I drap a curtsey, en say, 'Walk in, ladies. Ole mistis didn't know yer wuz a-comin', en she's jes' stepped out; but Miss Anna'll be down dreckly.' Now, one er dese wuthless yaller niggers bang open de do', en stan' dere wid dere hands in dey pockets like a scarecrow in a corn-field, en stare, en stare, en say, 'What yer want? Who yer want ter see?' En dey calls dat *manners!*" Aunt Sukey's face wore a look of withering scorn as she pointed out the deficiencies of Young Africa, and presently she went on: "I allus did 'spise 'em. Long ez dey'se got anyt'ing in dere stummucks ur on dey backs dey ain't gwine work,—not a lick. I sez to 'em sometimes, when I gits mad, 'Linkum would tie yer up en give yer fifty ef he had de chance, en den dere would be back rations owin' to yer.' Passel uv lazy, triffin', good-fur-nothin'—" (Here she dropped the large, clean towel that she always carried over her arm, and stooped stiffly to recover it, saying, parenthetically, "I allus carry dat roun'; en ef I want ter wipe a plate or bresh off anyt'ing, dar it is.") "Well, Jawn, my son, born de same year ole master's Robert, he done married one er dem fly-up-de-creek yaller gals, en fetch her home ter lib. He went to kawledge, en she

went ter kadermy, en de fust t'ing I knowed dey wuz man en wife 'fore de justush uv de peas. Jawn he used ter be a good boy 'fore dat, but a bad wife ud spile de angel Gabriel. He's done got kinder 'shamed uv his ole mammy here lately; en dat Ria's de sassiest imp dat ever made my blood bile. She's allus sayin' I ain't got no edjercation. Dis mornin' she ast me whar de skillet wuz, en I say I dunno dezackly, en she laafe, en say to Jawn, 'Tell your mamaw dat it ain't pronounce dat way: it's *adzackly*.' En I up en say, 'Jawn bin callin' me mammy eber sence he wuz knee-high to a duck, en ef he call me "mamaw" I gwine whop him, ef he wuz a hunderd.' En den I slam de do' en come away. She t'inks 'cause she has went to a kadermy, en has got a china saucer at de back uv her head, wid a bonnet top er dat, dat she's a lady. One time, not long ago, Ria got 'ligious, en we wuz at a camp-meetin', en de sperrit flung her on de floor, en dat saucer went crack! en de pieces flew every which er way. Ria wuz mad, I tell you. En I thought I would er split. 'T'ank de Lord I ain't got no shinyon,' sez I."

Mrs. Hawkins laughed feebly over this incident and the enjoyment it seemed to afford Aunt Sukey, who cackled shrilly at the remembrance and showed one snag of a front tooth (the last of the whitest set of ivories that ever lit up a black face) and a broad expanse of gums framed in deep wrinkles. Presently she stopped abruptly, assumed her most dignified air, refocussed her mouth, and said, "Stop talkin', chile. I don't want ter lecturefy yer, but you've got to stop when you're tole."

Mrs. Hawkins laughed again, remembering what her share in the conversation had been, and tried to extract fresh reminiscences from Aunt Sukey; but for the rest of the day she was speechlessly industrious and mounted guard at the other end of the room.

That night she announced her intention of going home, and, having brought Mrs. Hawkins's tea and the lights, went out into the hall and closed the door, only to reappear a moment later, and, thrusting half her body in the door, remark, "Ef I'se livin' en well, I'll be back in de mornin', maybe."

"Why, Aunt Sukey, do you feel ill?" asked her patient, impressed by her doubtful tone and the air she had of taking a long farewell.

"It may be de Lord's will ter take me," said Aunt Sukey, dolorously and enigmatically, as she left the room.

"Is she worn out nursing me, do you think?" asked Mrs. Hawkins of the mistress, who was sitting by.

"Oh, not at all. She has no more idea of being snatched away by a sudden or violent death than I have; but it is one of the peculiarities

of the race, like their distaste for confessing themselves in good health. If you were to ask Aunt Sukey every day for a year how she was, she would have a fresh ailment and answer for every occasion. She would say that she was 'creepin' through mercy,' or 't'anksful,' or that she had 'a bone in her arm,' or 'a misery in her head,' but she most certainly would never say that she was well. 'Enjoyin' bad health' would be the nearest approach to it, perhaps."

"What a queer creature she is!" said the invalid. "I have never been so much snubbed and tyrannized over in my whole life."

"What a dear creature, you mean. I don't know any one that I have a heartier love and respect for. I feel—indeed, we all do—that we can never repay the tenderness and goodness and fidelity she has shown us, both before and since the war. For months after she was freed, the dear old thing used to bring her wages regularly to my mother and beg and implore her to make use of the money, knowing how dreadfully poor we had become. Wasn't it sweet of her! We wouldn't have touched it unless we had been starving, of course; but we have never forgotten it," said the mistress, rather surprising Mrs. Hawkins by her enthusiasm, it being a fixed idea with that lady that every Southerner's hand was raised against the newly-emancipated.

Bright and early next day Aunt Sukey made her appearance with a lovely spray of columbine in her hand, which she gave her patient, saying, "Dere's some flowers fur yer, chile. Mighty pretty, ain't dey? Dey calls it de concubine, en it runs all over de poche uv my cabin. How does yer feel right now?"

"Much better, thank you," said Mrs. Hawkins, putting up her handkerchief to conceal her smiles at Aunt Sukey's shocking botanical revelations. "I think I shall sit up after a while."

"Gracious mussy! What's de chile talkin' 'bout! Set up? No indeed en double deed. Don't yer be so previous. I gwine clean yer up and lay yer out presently, en dar you'll stay fur a week."

"Where do you live, Aunt Sukey?" asked the patient. "I'd like to go and see you when I am well enough to take a drive."

"Well, yer goes out Main Street till yer come to a corner, en den yer branch off dere till yer gits to a street dat runs paralevel wid anoder street, en yer goes along fur a while till yer gits to a lane, en presently yer see a house dat emanates from de back, en dere I is. Dere ain't no water on de place, en it's mighty ill-convenient. I'm makin' my derangements to leave en go further in town. I kain't stay all day wid you, honey, widout yer needs me bad, cause de S'iety gwine turn out dis evenin' fur a big buryin'. But Miss Anna she say she'll nuss you."

"Society? What society do you mean?"

"De 'Nevolent S'iety, chile. Ain't yer never heerd of 'em? Why, whar yer bin raised? I keeps de regalium myself, en when I dies I ain't gwine be buried like a nigger dat ain't got no friends, I tell you! I'se gwine have a big funeral. I done got my close, en de S'iety will come marchin' along behin' de cawfin in a perseshun, en Brudder Beverley will be drawed out en wrassle a long time in pra'r, en den dey'll sing 'De Golden Slippers is on her Feet,' en glory! hallelujah! en den de doxologum, en kiver me up slow en soft, en leabe me to de Lord dat made me. Dey allus does dat way fur sisters in good standin', en, ef I sez it, dere ain't no sister dat can trow dirt at me."

A smile of extreme gratification lit up Aunt Sukey's face as she dwelt on her future obsequies, and it was easy to see that it was a favorite subject of meditation with her.

"I am glad to hear that you are so pious, Aunt Sukey. What church do you belong to?"

"I'se a deep-water Babtis', honey. Dat's de real high, ole church, ef yer believe me, dough it's got backslidin' members. What does de Book say? Dar ain't none good; no, not one. I prays de Lord, constant, ter keep me in a state uv salivation; but it's mighty slipperifyin' work bein' a Christian. Yer goes along nice en smooov fur a while, en yer say, 'Hi! dis is fine!' en de debbil grease yer up so slick dat yer kain't ketch hold uv yerself, en fust ting yer know dar yer is, hangin' by a bramble-bush over de bottomless pit, smellin' de sulphur uv yer own wickedness! En den dar ain't nothin' fur do but trus' de Lord en look up, en he'll pull yer out wid his strong arm and set yer top eend fo'most."

The old woman nodded her head emphatically and spoke with earnest simplicity. "Ria she is a Peskypalian. She say dere ain't no style 'bout de deep-water Babtisses, en she done jined a church whar dey've got a orgin en is allus jawin' back at de preacher. I 'clare it's sinful, dat it is! Ria's mighty festiverous dis mornin'. She say she gwine ter a big ball en gwine help recebe de company. Dere ain't nobody 'vited but teachers en cooks en misses en house-servants. En all de ge'men is waiters at de Peyton House, 'most. Dey don't 'low no washerwomens dar, Ria says, it's so genteel. Says she ter me, 'Mamaw, I tink I'll wear a simple white dress, wid a rose in de side uv my hair. It ull be so elligint.' En I wuz kinder cross, 'cause I hate all dat foolishness, en I speak my mind, en say, 'Alligator look better in de mud dan in de parlor. I do' wan' ter see roses in none uv yer wool.' Yer oughter seen Ria. She jes' raired. I ain't allus been a washerwoman. I used to wuz maid to Miss Anna's ma, en den nuss; en dere ain't no

driben snow whiter 'n my close. De diffunce is, I been taught to do eberyting. Dey dunno how ter do nothin'. Jes' like poor white trash goin' round beggin' 'n' stealin' fur a livin'! But dere, chile! why don' you keep quiet? Dat ole coon sure ter say it's my fault; en I done tole yer 'bout it, but yer will talk."

That day Mrs. Hawkins got by express a box, which, being opened, was found to contain some delicacies for her, and a black silk dress, of the cheap and very shiny description, for Aunt Sukey from Mr. Hawkins, with a message expressing his gratitude for her care of his wife. Great was the rapture of the old soul.

"I ain't had a black silk sence ole master died. De fam'ly's gone down in de world now, en I don' get presents like I used ter. Well, I declare! Dis is a quality gif', sho 'nuff; en I certainly is proud. I wonder what dat Ria'll say. Tell de ge'man dat I'se mighty t'ankful, en I'se gwine be buried in it. Dis is goin' in de chis', certain."

"What do you mean, Aunt Sukey?" said Mrs. Hawkins, watching her as she folded and gloated over her new possession.

"De cedar chis' what ole mistis lef' me. It say in de will, 'To my faithful Sukey, to reckermember me by.' Yes, chile, I'se allus been trus' by de fam'ly. En dis ull come in mighty useful, kase I ain't got no close."

Aunt Sukey's face as she made this statement was a study. First she chuckled convulsively, then looked up at Mrs. Hawkins and became preternaturally solemn, chuckled again, and said, "Nice present like dis kinder raise my sperrits, I'se so berry poor. Hi! dat Ria ull stick to me now like de tar-baby, en be slobberin' over me from mornin' till night."

With this she folded her dress in a new way, her fingers lingering caressingly among its shining pleats, and then carried it off with an alert step, her very back expressing gratification.

When she came back next day, the radiance had quite vanished, and she was so evidently disturbed that Mrs. Hawkins finally said, "You look troubled, Aunt Sukey. What is the matter?"

"It's 'bout money; en I is aggravated, dat's certain. Yer see, I been savin' my money ever sence de wah; en 'bout a year ago Jawn, dat's my son, he come to me en say, 'Mammy, dey say you got fifty dollars hide away in dat chis' o' yourn. 'Tain't safe. Yer gwine be kill fur it some night ef yer don't look out. Yer'd better give it ter me, en I'll put it in de bank, en dey'll give yer a book, en nobody kain't tech it 'ceptin' you, ef dey wuz itchin' fur it ever so.' So I on-lock de chis' en give Jawn dat money. En I ain't never seed it sence. I ax Jawn ag'in and ag'in 'bout de bank, en he say de bank closed, ur

de bank warn't payin' no divydums, en oder 'scuceses like dat. En yesterday Jawn he come home en say, 'Mammy, de bank's done broke!' En I say, 'Whar's de pieces? I wants de pieces.' En dat hussy Ria laafe en laafe till de tears run down. En dat's all de saterfaction I got."

"What a shame!" exclaimed the listener. "I shall try to find out what bank it was put in, and make them give it back to you again."

Aunt Sukey shook her head mournfully. "'Tain't no use, chile, dough I am 'bleeged to yer. De trufe is—I don' like ter say it, but Jawn he wuz de bank, I'm 'most shore."

She was dusting the mantel-shelf, and made a vigorous onslaught with the turkey-tail duster, as she spoke, on the pictures above. Mrs. Hawkins caught a profile view of her features,—the lips thrust out, the eyelashes wet with tears, and the feathers quivering in the trembling hand.

"I suspicioned it, kinder, fur a long while. Jawn ain't done no work fur six mont'; dat Ria ain't done none fur a year; en dey bofe uv 'em been gallivantin' en dressin' en goin' on like Christmas in de quarters all de time. De black race is de bes' race de Lord ever made, but dey'se powerful weak 'bout some t'ings. Yes, Jawn wuz de bank. I'se 'shamed to say so, but it's de trufe. Whar did Ria git dat ten dollar she give fur git up dat ball? Say! Yes, I'se mightily 'shamed. My skin is black, *but my principles is white*," said she, turning around with an air of real dignity, her eyes full of tears. "Sence I wuz dat high" (putting out her hand to measure it) "it's allus been said, 'Sukey can be trus'; en it hurts me here" (laying her hand on her breast) "to think dat my son is a t'ief."

The poor old woman broke down here, and, sinking on the floor, dropped her head on her knees, and cried bitterly: "Oh, Jawn, Jawn, my son! Ter steal from yer ole mammy, what's work for yer ever sence yer wuz bawn, en would gib yer her heart's blood! O Lord, take me out dis world! Take me!" she moaned, as she rocked herself backward and forward, in accents of real grief,—the same grief (expressed in nearly the same words) as that of the Hebrew king.

Moved by the honest creature's distress, Mrs. Hawkins said all she could to comfort her, and after a long silence, during which nothing was heard but the rich tones of a mocking-bird singing joyously outside and an occasional moan or long-drawn sigh from Aunt Sukey, a pathetic old figure of despair still crouched on the floor, her arms thrown up over her head and the sunshine streaming over the uplifted, deeply-lined, tear-washed face, she rose suddenly, threw her apron over her head, and left the room.

This occurred on Saturday; and on Monday morning Mrs. Hawkins, who was sitting by the open window in an invalid-chair, enjoying the mild, flower-laden air, heard angry voices wrangling in a high key at some distance, and presently Aunt Sukey darted around the corner of the house, with body erect and flashing eyes that seemed to send out red gleams of intermittent light as she strode past the croquet-field. It was quite evident that she was in a towering rage. She was talking to herself. "Ef dat nigger don' pay me dat money what he owe me, I gwine beat him! ef he don' pay me den, I gwine put de law to him!" she quavered out, in shrill, trembling tones of excitement, as though she was talking of applying a mustard-plaster or a torch.

"You look angry. What's gone wrong?" queried Mrs. Hawkins, as she entered the room.

"It's dat triffin' Brudder Beverley," she exclaimed, glad to have a listener. "Yer see, long while ago, 'fore Jawn play me dat bad trick, Brudder Beverley he come to me en sez, sez he, 'Sister Sukey, de S'iety is in need uv funds, en you is one uv de prudent, leadin' members: won't yer lend de S'iety thirty dollars, to be paid out de fust abstractions dat comes in back to yer ag'in?' En I didn't want ter lend dat money at all, en I say, 'I dunno as I'se got dat amount.' En he laafe, en say, 'Oh, shur, Sister Sukey. We all knows yer is de most respectablest member uv de S'iety. Dere ain't no risk 'bout it, 'cause de money'll be gib back to yer berry soon, wid five dollars more ter boot. I'se de president uv de S'iety, en I knows.' Well, chile, I onlock de chis' dat time, en ontie my stockin', en git him what he ax fur. En what yer t'ink he say now? He swear to goodness dat he ain't never borrored dat money at all, en he sez dat *I'se* tryin' ter cheat de S'iety! It's de most outdashus lie dat wuz ever tole by dat ole oily hypocrite. He kin preach de rag off de bush, en all dem fools gwine believe him, too. But my mind done made up. I'se gwine put de law to him."

The efficacy of the application she never doubted for a moment, and the importance of it almost reconciled her to the loss of the money.

"That seems a wonderful chest of yours, Aunt Sukey. How much more money have you got in it? I guess it's full of nice things, isn't it?"

A look of alarm swept over Aunt Sukey's face at this, and then she laughed uneasily, and said, "Law, chile, yer makin' fun of Aunt Sukey. What a poor ole ooman like me got? Dey done got all I had; en dat ain't de wust. De whole capoodle gwine believe dat ole 'possum, 'ceptin' Sister Mirybel. She say, when I tole her 'bout it, dat Brudder Beverley libin' at her darter Ann's, en dat he got a new shoot uv close en a silber-head stick wid dat money, she's jes' shore. She

'cuse him uv it, too, right to his face, en she say he look mighty mean fur a minit, en den he cast down his eyes en say, 'Hesh, Sister Miry-bel! what does de Scriptur say? "Dou shalt not muzzle de ox dat treadeth out de corns." En ag'in, "De laborer is wuth his hire."' En den she call him a t'ief; en he done put her right out de S'iety,—her en me, bofe uv us!"

Aunt Sukey wept at the idea, and went on, "Dat ain't all my troubles. 'Pears to me I'se being pick like chicken 'fore camp-meetin'. Saturday night I had dat trouble, en I didn't sleep right soun', en I t'ought somethin' wuz wonderin' roun' my room,—ole master's sperrit, maybe,—so I crope down in de bed, en kiver up my head, en never stir endurin' de night. Well, next day wuz Sunday, en when I git up I look on de peg fur my blue dress wid de yaller facin's Miss Anna gib me, en it warn't dere! 'Dat's Ria,' sez I; en I went roun' to the Peskypalian church right off dat minit fur ketch her, and dere was Ria on her knees 'fore de Lord's table in my dress, shore 'nuff. I wait till Ria git back to her place near de do', and den I call, 'Ria!' en when she see me she flung outen de church home, en ondress like lightnin'; en when I git dar I jes' raise my hands en say, 'Well, at de Lord's table!' En she fling my dress on de bed, en say, 'Dere! take yer ole dress. It's bin turn upside down en hind part befo', got a hole in de back, en done los' its color. Does yer suppose I'se gwine let a dress dat you kin hol' up to de winder en see daylight t'rough stan' 'tween me en glory? De Lord knows 'tain't wuth nothin' noways, en he ain't gwine reckermember no dress like dat ag'in' nobody.' Den I lose my temper, en I jes' took dat Ria boddashusly en turn her out de house."

Aunt Sukey's dramatic gestures and extreme animation of manner made her description of her domestic differences highly diverting, apart from the ethics of the situation, so that, in spite of her efforts to control her risibles, Mrs. Hawkins could not suppress a hearty laugh; and, the mistress coming in just then with a tray of delicacies encircled in fruit and flowers, nothing more was heard of Aunt Sukey that day.

About a week later she hobbled in one day with her arm in a sling and her whole person wearing an indescribably shrunken, miserable air.

"Dear me, Aunt Sukey, are you ill? Have you hurt your arm? I hope not," said Mrs. Hawkins.

Down went the corners of the old woman's mouth. "I kain't lif' my hand to my head, chile. I'se been voodooed."

"Voodooed? What do you mean?"

"Konjured, honey. Dat Ria's konjured me. I find two straws outen de broom cross' ober de do'-sill dis mornin', en I know what dat

mean. Chicken-gizzard under my pillow, too. I knows who put 'em dar. I ain't never gwine be well ag'in till I breaks de spell."

"Good gracious, Aunt Sukey!" cried Mrs. Hawkins, indignantly, "is it possible that you can believe such stuff and nonsense as that?"

"Tain't nonsense. Don't I tell yer I kain't lif' my hand to my head?"

"Well, what of that? You've got rheumatism, that's all; and I will give you some liniment for it. Rub it well, and you'll be all right in a few days."

"Tain't no use, chile, thank yer. Yer knows when yer's konjured. I'm studyin' how to break de spell. Dat's de only way to git shut of dis here pain."

Mrs. Hawkins argued and ridiculed eloquently for ten minutes, and showed clearly, as she thought, the absurdity and impossibility of being "voodooed;" but Aunt Sukey only shook her head dolefully and went on with her work, muttering, "Miss Anna done took Ria fur house-maid. I'se got to break it in dis house. Neber be well ag'in till I breaks it."

Nothing more was said; but Aunt Sukey took no remedies, got no better, and looked more and more wretched every day.

Spring had now come and nearly gone. Mrs. Hawkins had more than regained all she had lost, and determined to go home. On the day agreed upon, her husband came for her, and was charmed beyond expression by the improvement in her health. "You have no idea how well and pretty you look," said he. "The air here has been magical in its effects. Blessed be Georgia and the Georgians forever! Aunt Sukey, pack her things and get her ready. We leave this evening."

"Don't be so 'previous,' Charley. You are not going to whisk me away 'boddashusly' until I am ready. Oh, I forget that you are not used to the new and delightful dictionary of terms that I have borrowed from Aunt Sukey. I have been wanting some of them all my life, and never had the sense to manufacture them as she has done. Won't the 10.30 train to-morrow be the best for us to take?" whispered his wife.

A discussion of their plans followed, and Mrs. Hawkins's suggestion was accepted, the interval being very agreeably spent on the part of the husband in making acquaintance with the family, and in reluctant adieux, with promises of unlimited correspondence, on that of the ex-invalid.

Coming down to breakfast next morning in the pleasant dining-room (a late addition to the house, with a bow-window jutting out into the garden), they found the mistress very pleasant and cordial and full of

hospitable care for their comfort, but either very tearful over the prospect of parting with them or suffering from a bad cold in the head.

"Sit down," said she, sneezing as she spoke. They complied, and presently the other members of the family dropped in. One by one, then in twos, threes, and entire concert, the company began to follow the mistress's example. Sneeze followed sneeze with ever-increasing celerity and violence. Eyes were wiped and handkerchiefs generally in requisition, until at last they all rose and rushed out into the garden, unable to support the stifling, peculiar atmosphere of the room another moment. They all asked each other what it could possibly mean, repeatedly, and investigation by the gentlemen revealed a wide train of red pepper laid around the bow-window, inside and out, with a particularly liberal supply on the window-seats and the door-sills, which the fine morning breeze had duly sifted up their nostrils. Ria, who was one gigantic sneeze as she stood behind her silver-tray waiting to serve breakfast, was summoned by the mistress, with all the other servants, to explain what such an extraordinary state of affairs meant, but could only sneeze out tearful, choky denials of any knowledge of or share in the transaction. All the others denied and disclaimed with one accord, until Aunt Sukey's turn came: she, like St. Paul, stood out and was bold.

"I'se de one, Miss Anna. I did sprinkle dat pepper. De Voodoo priestess tol' me dat ef I could get a ring uv pepper round Ria 'fore de sun drunk up de dew, en make her sneeze twice runnin', dat de spell would break what she konjured me wid. En, t'ank de Lord, it's broke. De berry minit she snoze, I felt somethin' go crack! in my arm; en now it's jes' as well as de udder one. But I'se mighty sorry to make de rest uv yer so uncumfable."

The mistress hereupon delivered an address that was excellent in matter, though rather tart as to its temper (which I have no doubt had the effect of confirming Aunt Sukey's prejudices instead of dissipating them), and, time pressing, the travellers hurriedly swallowed a cup of coffee and drove to the station, followed by the hearty good wishes of the family and the rather sheepish glances of Aunt Sukey, who took up a position at the front gate out of reach of the mistress's eye, and beamed delightedly over the *douceur* Mrs. Hawkins slipped in her hand.

Two years later, Mrs. Hawkins, who had kept up a regular correspondence with the mistress, got a letter from her in which she said, "You will be sorry, I am sure, not to get any more of the messages with which Aunt Sukey has constantly charged me. The good, faithful creature died about two weeks ago, and since I lost my mother I can recall no event that has distressed me more, severing as it did the

last link that bound me to the happy, cloudless past of my childhood. I was away at the time, and it is really a grief to me to feel that the poor old soul's dearest, often-expressed wish about the conduct of her funeral should not have been observed. John and Maria behaved in the most unprincipled way, the servants tell me. They laid her out in her very oldest and shabbiest clothes, and buried her with as little ceremony as though she had been a dog,—the president of her beloved society, with whom she had had some quarrel, refusing to officiate. I have tried to atone for it as far as I could by having a modest monument put up to her memory,—a memory that I shall always cherish with sincere affection. I was surprised to learn that she had sixty dollars laid by in the chest my dear mother gave her, besides twenty-seven dresses, unmade, a quantity of other clothing, and a miscellaneous collection of odds and ends, the carefully-hoarded savings of a lifetime. It gave me a pang last Sunday to see Maria flaunting in the black silk dress you so kindly gave Aunt Sukey, and I wonder her ineffable airs and indescribable graces did not effect an immediate resurrection of her poor mother-in-law."

Fanny Courtenay Baylor.

APACHE.

FROM the awful desolation of the Llano Estacado
 I have traced my red dominions with your blood upon the sand;
 You may see its current tingeing through the tawny Colorado,—
 Are you mad, that you imagine I shall stay my lifted hand?
 I defy you and I hate you! Do you threaten me with death?—
 Me, whose fervid spirit surges with the centuries' hot breath?
 Turn and ask this flaming desert,—it has lain forever so;
 It has scorched the helpless *mesa* with its seething overflow;
 Molten, pitiless, remorseless,—ask it if I fear to die!

I am one with this,—immortal,—and the bloodshot suns of years
 Burn within my soul, as ages they have burned this alkali;

I shall be again the desert,—what have I to do with fears?
 You shall die, and I shall clasp you to my heart with hot embrace,
 Whispering words of awful vengeance in your pallid, speechless face.

Charles Henry Phelps.

OUR EXPERIENCE MEETINGS.

I.

MY LITERARY AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

IN 1869, when I was about twenty-three years old, I sent a couple of sonnets to the revived *Putnam's Magazine*. At that period I had no intention of becoming a professional writer: I was studying civil engineering at the Polytechnic School in Dresden, Saxony. Years before, I had received parental warnings—unnecessary, as I thought—against writing for a living. During the next two years, however, when I was acting as hydrographic engineer in the New York Dock Department, I amused myself by writing a short story called "Love and Counter-Love," which was published in *Harper's Weekly*, and for which I was paid fifty dollars. "If fifty dollars can be so easily earned," I thought, "why not go on adding to my income in this way from time to time?" I was aided and abetted in the idea by the late Robert Carter, editor of *Appletons' Journal*; and the latter periodical and *Harper's Magazine* had the burden, and I the benefit, of the result. When, in 1872, I was abruptly relieved from my duties in the Dock Department, I had the alternative of either taking my family down to Central America to watch me dig a canal, or of attempting to live by my pen. I bought twelve reams of large letter-paper, and began my first work,—"*Bressant*." I finished it in three weeks; but prudent counsellors advised me that it was too immoral to publish, except in French: so I recast it, as the phrase is, and, in its chastened state, sent it through the post to a Boston publisher. It was lost on the way, and has not yet been found. I was rather pleased than otherwise at this catastrophe; for I had in those days a strange delight in rewriting my productions: it was, perhaps, a more sensible practice than to print them. Accordingly, I rewrote and enlarged "*Bressant*" in Dresden (whither I returned with my family in 1872); but—immorality aside—I think the first version was the best of the three. On my way to Germany I passed through London, and there made the acquaintance of Henry S. King, the publisher, a charming but imprudent man, for he paid me one hundred pounds for the English copyright of my novel; and the moderate edition he printed is, I believe, still unexhausted. The book was received in a kindly manner by the press; but both in this country and in England some surprise and indignation were ex-

pressed that the son of his father should presume to be a novelist. This sentiment, whatever its bearing upon me, has undoubtedly been of service to my critics: it gives them something to write about. A disquisition upon the mantle of Nathaniel Hawthorne, and an analysis of the differences and similarities between him and his successor, generally fill so much of a notice as to enable the reviewer to dismiss the book itself very briefly. I often used to wish, when, years afterwards, I was myself a reviewer for the London *Spectator*, that I could light upon some son of his father who might similarly lighten my labors. Meanwhile, I was agreeably astonished at what I chose to consider the success of "Bressant," and set to work to surpass it in another romance, called (for some reason I have forgotten) "Idolatry." This unknown book was actually rewritten, in whole or in part, no less than seven times. *Non sum qualis eram*. For seven or eight years past I have never rewritten one of the many pages which circumstances have compelled me to inflict upon the world. But the discipline of "Idolatry" probably taught me how to clothe an idea in words.

By the time "Idolatry" was published, the year 1874 had come, and I was living in London. From my note-books and recollections I compiled a series of papers on life in Dresden, under the general title of "Saxon Studies." Alexander Strahan, then editor of the *Contemporary Review*, printed them in that periodical as fast as I wrote them, and they were reproduced in certain eclectic magazines in this country,—until I asserted my American copyright. Their publication in book-form was followed by the collapse of both the English and the American firm engaging in that enterprise. I draw no deductions from that fact: I simply state it. The circulation of the "Studies" was naturally small; but one copy fell into the hands of a Dresden critic, and the manner in which he wrote of it and its author repaid me for the labor of composition and satisfied me that I had not done amiss.

After "Saxon Studies" I began another novel, "Garth," instalments of which appeared from month to month in *Harper's Magazine*. When it had run for a year or more, with no signs of abatement, the publishers felt obliged to intimate that unless I put an end to their misery they would. Accordingly, I promptly gave Garth his quietus. The truth is, I was tired of him myself. With all his qualities and virtues, he could not help being a prig. He found some friends, however, and still shows signs of vitality. I wrote no other novel for nearly two years, but contributed some sketches of English life to *Appletons' Journal*, and produced a couple of novelettes,—"Mrs. Gainsborough's Diamonds" and "Archibald Malmaison,"—which, by reason of their light draught, went rather farther than usual. Other short tales, which I hardly care

to recall, belong to this period. I had already ceased to take pleasure in writing for its own sake,—partly, no doubt, because I was obliged to write for the sake of something else. Only those who have no reverence for literature should venture to meddle with the making of it,—unless, at all events, they can supply the demands of the butcher and baker from an independent source.

In 1879 “Sebastian Strome” was published as a serial in *All the Year Round*. Charley Dickens, the son of the great novelist, and editor of the magazine, used to say to me while the story was in progress, “Keep that red-haired girl up to the mark, and the story will do.” I took a fancy to Mary Dene myself. But I uniformly prefer my heroines to my heroes; perhaps because I invent the former out of whole cloth, whereas the latter are often formed of shreds and patches of men I have met. And I never raised a character to the position of hero without recognizing in him, before I had done with him, an egregious ass. Differ as they may in other respects, they are all brethren in that; and yet I am by no means disposed to take a Carlylese view of my actual fellow-creatures.

I did some hard work at this time: I remember once writing for twenty-six consecutive hours without pausing or rising from my chair; and when, lately, I reread the story then produced, it seemed quite as good as the average of my work in that kind. I hasten to add that it has never been printed in this country: for that matter, not more than half my short tales have found an American publisher. “Archibald Malmaison” was offered seven years ago to all the leading publishers in New York and Boston, and was promptly refused by all. Since its recent appearance here, however, it has had a circulation larger perhaps than that of all my other stories combined. But that is one of the accidents that neither author nor publisher can foresee. It was the horror of “Archibald Malmaison,” not any literary merit, that gave it vogue,—its horror, its strangeness, and its brevity.

On Guy Fawkes’ Day, 1880, I began “Fortune’s Fool,”—or “Luck,” as it was first called,—and wrote the first ten of the twelve numbers in three months. I used to sit down to my table at eight o’clock in the evening and write till sunrise. But the two remaining instalments were not written and published until 1883, and this delay and its circumstances spoiled the book. In the interval between beginning and finishing it another long novel—“Dust”—was written and published. I returned to America in 1882, after an absence in Europe far longer than I had anticipated or desired. I trust I may never leave my native land again for any other on this planet.

“Beatrix Randolph,” “Noble Blood,” and “Love—or a Name,” are

the novels which I have written since my return ; and I also published a biography, "Nathaniel Hawthorne and his Wife." I cannot conscientiously say that I have found the literary profession—in and for itself—entirely agreeable. Almost everything that I have written has been written from necessity ; and there is very little of it that I shall not be glad to see forgotten. The true rewards of literature, for men of limited calibre, are the incidental ones,—the valuable friendships and the charming associations which it brings about. For the sake of these I would willingly endure again many passages of a life that has not been all roses. Not that I would appear to belittle my own work : it does not need it. But the present generation (in America at least) does not strike me as containing much literary genius. The number of undersized persons is large and active, and we hardly believe in the possibility of heroic stature. I cannot sufficiently admire the pains we are at to make our work—embodying the aims it does—immaculate in form. Form without idea is nothing, and we have no ideas. If one of us were to get an idea, it would create its own form, as easily as does a flower or a planet. I think we take ourselves too seriously : our posterity will not be nearly so grave over us. For my part, I do not write better than I do, because I have no ideas worth better clothes than they can pick up for themselves. "Whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing with your best pains," is a saying which has injured our literature more than any other single thing. How many a lumber-closet since the world began has been filled by the results of this purblind and delusive theory ! But this is not autobiographical,—save that to have written it shows how little prudence my life has taught me.

Julian Hawthorne.

A FEW LITERARY EXPERIENCES.

IN trying to recall just when I began to "write," I find myself drifting among very childish memories. Unless I greatly mistake, I could not have been much over nine years old when I conceived the idea of composing a story. I remember its name perfectly. I called it "Mrs. Morse ; or, A Widow's Trials." At this time I had a mania for names, and on the first foolscap page of my maiden manuscript I placed eighteen, feminine and masculine. They designated the half-orphan progeny of my heroine, Mrs. Morse. She had been left with them at the opening of the tale, and she was supporting them (Walter, Olivia, Julian, Claribel, Harold, and thirteen others) under circumstances of the most poignant want. Their want was, indeed, so poignant that they were all stated to be in the early throes of starvation on my first foolscap page. Then I am distinctly conscious that I created a

villain who held Mrs. Morse in his power, and who incidentally forced his way into her one miserable apartment and gloated over her. I had no definite conception of what I meant by letting my villain gloat. But it looked well, and I seemed to have some sort of authority for its being a tendency on the part of villains, so I introduced and rather amplified the circumstance. All the rest of the story is misted with forgetfulness, except one luridly dramatic point of it, near the close. One day, while Mrs. Morse, surrounded by her eighteen clinging children with their beautiful names, was being gloated upon more industriously than usual, the villain suddenly resolved to carry her off. I have not the least recollection of why or whither he desired to carry her off; but I feel certain that my unhappy Mrs. Morse accomplished her salvation by a *deus ex machinâ* which I thought singularly fine. Seizing a bottle of brandy, which by some blessed chance happened to be within arm's reach of this starving and prolific widow, she dexterously poured its contents down the villain's throat; and, while he was strangling from the results of this opportune alcoholic assault, Mrs. Morse, eagerly followed by her enormous offspring, rushed from the clutches of her baffled tormentor. . . .

Meanwhile, I had dropped into poetry, perhaps as a relief to the more exacting duties of my new career as a novelist. How I would like to see some of those early rhymes! And I am almost certain that the readers of *Lippincott's* would be, on the whole, less bored than amused by them,—a prophecy much more confident, by the way, than any which I would be prepared to make regarding my later verse. But when I had reached the manly age of eleven I had begun to look with amused scorn upon the literary follies of my boyhood. If I am not mistaken, "Mrs. Morse" was now destroyed (would that she had not been!) in a spirit of gentle pity. I now felt myself *lancé* and fully equipped. For some occult and never-to-be-explained reason, I abandoned foolscap. My future stories were all written in copy-books. And it is extraordinary how many copy-bookfuls of fiction I produced during the next two years. On the reverse pages of these thin pamphlets I would announce new works as "in preparation," or "shortly to appear," imitating the advertisements of contemporary publishers. But, alas! even the very titles of these stories are mostly forgotten. Now and then recollection serves me, however, when I strive to review their vanished glories. One copy-book story I clearly remember. I thought it my "Waverley," my "Père Goriot," my "Vanity Fair." It was called "Rosa: A Tale of Spain and Portugal." I wrote the title before I wrote the story,—as was usually my custom. The hero (whose name, I believe, was Don Alonzo) had passed several chapters

of existence in Spain, when I suddenly recollected that my narrative was also to deal with Portugal. Disheartened but not crushed by this consideration, I promptly put Don Alonzo on board of a ship, wrecked him disastrously after a day or two of seafaring, and made him swim through a portion of the Bay of Biscay until he reached the Portuguese shore. Here ended my first copy-book. The second copy-book dealt with Portugal, since my hero had been safely landed there; and so, while filling it, I felt that I was conscientiously meeting the demand of a large and exacting future public.

It is hard to fix upon the precise period when all these absurdities of ambition melted into thin air. I suppose the change was wrought by an exodus from private home tuition into the louder and more actual life of the ordinary New York school. From fourteen until my graduation at Columbia College, when I had reached the age of twenty, I wrote little, and had no clear belief that I could ever write with skill or point. My father (from whom I have inherited whatever powers the most kindly of my critics may accredit me with possessing) was a man of extraordinary mentality and great reading. An Englishman by birth, he had reached these shores at a comparatively youthful age, and, as I now reflect upon his ended days, I cannot but feel that the gifts which he has so meagrely transmitted to me, his only son, would in his own personality have shone forth most brilliantly had not a commercial life been forced upon him. A few of his old friends, who still live, remember his great mental endowments with admiration, and I trust that I may be pardoned, because of the joy and pride which they will take in this brief reference, for having alluded to an intellect of which I am so poor and unworthy an heir.

My father desired, and most eagerly, that I should study law after leaving college. But I rebelled, and became—a teller of tales, a writer of verses, a maker of plays. My first published novel was written with the usual fervor of adolescence, and given to the world with expectations of untold magnitude. It fell wretchedly flat, and caused me the usual sufferings. My second novel, "Ellen Story," did a little better, but not encouragingly so. Meanwhile, I had printed stories and verses in the current magazines, and the then editor of the *Atlantic*, now a novelist of accepted fame, had repeatedly given me his most active support. Many of my early lyric poems, such as "The Toad," "The Bat," "The Humming-Bird," "Immortelles," and "A Straggler," not to mention such sonnets as "Baudelaire," "Asters," "Betrothal," and "Medusa," first saw the light in the pages of that still vigorous and charming *Atlantic*. But, although my merits both as a versifier and a fictionist were then (I allude to the years from 1870 to 1876) in a

certain way recognized, I doubt if the money which came to me could solely, as the phrase goes, have supported me like a gentleman. I had still made no "hit" in the world of letters, whatever that may mean; and when my first book of poems, "Fantasy and Passion" (published in 1878), delighted my gaze, I had passed through many despondent hours. I could write much just here about the languor shown towards all modern verse by the present age; and yet, when I bring to mind how little verse I nowadays desire to publish, and how cordially what I do desire to publish is received by those to whom choice makes me send it, I feel that perhaps many other co-workers in the same field have reason to complain much more piteously than myself. Since producing "Fantasy and Passion," I have brought out another poetical volume, "Song and Story." This book certainly possesses more ambition than the last, however it may fall short as accomplishment. It represents years of the most thoughtful toil, and the reward for which I strove in writing it is one not to be calculated by popularity. In a brief essay like this the chance to air opinions, to answer one's hostile critics, is temptingly ample; and yet it must be surrendered. There is no telling just how far down a man might slip if he once gave himself full swing. It is possible that he might reach a very low level,—even that of the gentlemen who write newspaper "notices" of his books, and so often with neither taste nor intelligence.

My place in poetry is unsettled, though perhaps not wholly disallowed. I cannot say that I have been by any means a luckless poet, if regarded from the practical point of view; for the commercial value of my verse (to put it somewhat coarsely) is larger now than ever before. Egotism is the stumbling-block in any such confession as this, and if I seem to be an egotist I shall have struck most unintentionally against that which I wish to avoid. It is my own belief that my poetical faculty is my most authentic one. When I am impelled to write a poem, there always appears to be but a single truly effective way of attaining this object, while in dealing with prose I am often more doubtful concerning methods, as if it were a dialect less natural to me than the metrical one. And here it may not be amiss for me to state frankly what I have tried to do as a writer of verse. I have avoided obscurity, aimed at a rich yet robust style, shunned mannerism, affectation, and mere dilettante archaism, striven to have my poetry reflect the time in which I live, cultivated with zeal the delightful possibilities of rhythm and melody, and cordially detested the prevailing impulse to employ sound as the inferior of sense.

But enough of poetry. Prose has thus far been my mainstay. In 1880 I wrote and published "A Hopeless Case." The novelette was

no pecuniary *trouvaille* to me, and yet it had the good fortune to please certain minds whose approbation was not idly bestowed. Before this (in 1876) I had written "Rutherford," which had run through many numbers of a journal called *The Library Table*. But "Rutherford" was not put into a volume till some time later, though it is esteemed by certain competent judges to be my strongest prose work. In 1881 (or was it '82?) I brought out "A Gentleman of Leisure." This book, selling well up in the thousands, led me to believe that I was perhaps really endowed with the novelist's gift. I then wrote "An Ambitious Woman," which Mr. Whitelaw Reid at once accepted for serial publication in the *New York Tribune*. By this time I had realized that the great city in which I had been born and reared was full of opportunities for the writer of fiction. My "Ambitious Woman," warmly recognized and widely read, marked an epoch in my literary life. Henceforth, if years are spared to me, I shall concern myself solely, as a story-teller, with the rich material that I think is afforded by the populous and growing city of my birth. I am perfectly content with my New York, and willingly leave to other novelists their preferred domains of exploit. Without the least boastful designs, I feel confident that experience has equipped me notably and exceptionally for the task which I have set myself. How far talent and ability may have done so is a question which I shall not even remotely suggest. "Tinkling Cymbals" followed "An Ambitious Woman." It was printed in that bright and readable magazine, *The Manhattan*, before its publication as a book. It has not, for some reason, achieved the popularity of its predecessor, though I gave it great care and patiently repolished every line of it before finally letting it see the light. "The Adventures of a Widow" came afterwards, and was printed as a serial in the *Canadian Week*. If I am not mistaken, this novel failed to please the Canadians, who like their fiction peppered with "incident," and were no doubt a good deal bored by its total lack of conventional plot and its close adherence to human portraiture. I was in Europe when "The Adventures of a Widow" appeared as a volume, but I saw some very stinging reviews of it in certain New York journals. The acid quality of these reviews did not surprise me, for the story dealt with just such men and women as would be called upon to criticise it; and that these should take the easy course of denouncing my work as "caricature" and "exaggeration" entirely fulfilled whatever prophecies I might have had the leisure to draw. Equally severe have been the censures levelled against my "Social Silhouettes," reprinted recently from *The Tribune*. I have scarcely seen a single civil criticism of them in any New York newspaper; and yet it is almost certain that the writers of these contempt-

uous columns have never mingled among the people whom I endeavored to describe, and are for the most part as ignorant of so-called aristocratic New York doings as I myself am ignorant of society in either San Francisco or Vienna.

I mentioned that I have been a maker of plays; and there may be a few theatre-goers who remember "The False Friend" and "Our First Families." These were my two dramatic successes. "Americans Abroad" and "Sixes and Sevens" (a harmless little farce, which was not worth half the rancorous critical energy it aroused) were my two dramatic failures. I may again produce a play at some New York theatre, though I am almost convinced that the time is not yet ripe for our men of letters to seek distinction on the American stage. We not only have to fight the whole European market; we have to fight the very best plays of that market,—plays which have achieved vogue and popularity abroad. And then it is very doubtful whether the drama as treated by real dramatists is needed here at all. There is a very slight demand for it now in England, and there are very few good plays brought out in England. The French and the Germans want good plays—and get them. It seems to me that as soon as America wants good plays by native authors she will get them too. I hope that time may not be far off, but I cannot help thinking that it is most dishearteningly far off.

When I reflect upon the career that I have chosen, I have no regrets that I did choose it. However ill I may have followed it, there is none other that I could have followed as well. I am not dissatisfied with the gross results, either as regards reputation or pecuniary emolument, which have thus far accrued to me. I can never rid myself of a conviction that both have been much more generous than I deserve. I only wish that my readers loved to have me write for them as much as I love to write for them. There is a great deal more that I want to write for them (now, in my thirty-eighth year), and if they receive my future work as kindly and indulgently as they have received my past work, I shall esteem myself peculiarly fortunate.

Edgar Fawcett.

AN ACCIDENTAL AUTHOR.

As this paper is to be part of an experience meeting, I may as well begin it by relating how I have been pursued by a scientific lunatic who formerly hailed from Florida. In 1870, while associate editor of the *Savannah Morning News*, I was introduced by a prominent gentleman of that city to a preacher from Florida. I do not know to what religious denomination this preacher belonged, but he appeared, at first

sight, to be a very serious person, full of grace and fervor. He was a fluent talker, and after I had known him a day or two he imparted to me certain information which he declared was of the utmost importance to the country and to myself. He said he had discovered that the earth, instead of being round, was shaped like an egg, and that, instead of revolving around the sun, it was itself the centre around which the sun revolved; that the seasons, the periods of heat and cold, were the results of the endosmose and exosmose processes; and so on and so forth. My friend proved to be a great bore. He not only had his theory, but he had composed a poem to describe and substantiate it,—a tremendous poem as to length,—and this he left with me, stating that he expected me to be the medium or the means of bringing his extraordinary theory and his remarkable poem to the attention of the public. I was a young man then,—younger in experience than in years,—and a spirit of mischief, almost inconceivable in its stupidity, led me to write a satirical paragraph or two about this preacher's theory. He sent for the manuscript of his remarkable poem, and made his way Northward, probably to Chicago, and has busied himself with my biography from that day to this. There is nothing malicious in his inventions, and I have no doubt they are worth something in the shape of advertisements, but their wild improbability has given them a place in the current newspaper literature of the day.

For instance, few readers of this magazine have failed to see the announcement in the daily papers that "the author of 'Uncle Remus' is a native of Africa, having been born at Joel, on the northeast coast, of missionary parents." This is only one of many inventions which have been put forth by my Florida friend. He never fails to send me a marked copy of the paper in which his inventions first appear, attaching his initials, as if to remind me of the penalty of satirizing his poem. But, as I have said, he is not malicious. He merely insists that I was born in Africa, and that my hair is snowy white as the result of a "strangely romantic career." He is determined that I shall figure as a myth. I desire to say here that I have reconsidered my youthful views in regard to his poem; moreover, I am willing to give his theory of the exosmose and endosmose processes a complete, if not a cordial, endorsement. When one's dearest enemy has access to the columns of a Chicago newspaper it is time to suggest a truce. I gladly hoist the white flag.

I was born in the little village of Eatonton, Putnam county, Georgia, December 9, 1848, in the humblest sort of circumstances. My desire to write—to give expression to my thoughts—grew out of hearing my mother read "The Vicar of Wakefield." I was too young to appreciate

the story, but there was something in the style or something in the humor of that remarkable little book that struck my fancy, and I straightway fell to composing little tales in which the principal character—whether hero or heroine—astonished and silenced the other characters by crying *Fudge!* at every possible opportunity. None of these little tales have been preserved, but I am convinced that, since their keynote was *Fudge!* they must have been very close to human nature.

In 1862 I saw an advertisement in a little weekly paper, *The Countryman*, calling for an apprentice to learn the printing-business. This advertisement I responded to, and it was not many days before I was installed in the office of the only genuine country newspaper ever printed in this country. *The Countryman* was edited by Mr. Joseph A. Turner, and was published on his plantation, nine or ten miles from any post-office. In truth, *The Countryman* was published in the country. A partridge built her nest within five paces of the window where I learned to set type, and hatched her brood undisturbed. The cat-squirrels frolicked on the roof, and a gray fox, whose range was in the neighborhood, used to flit across the orchard-path in full view. *The Countryman* was published on a plantation, and it was on this and neighboring plantations that I became familiar with the curious myths and animal stories that form the basis of the volumes credited to Uncle Remus. I absorbed the stories, songs, and myths that I heard, but had no idea of their literary value until, some time in the seventies, *Lippincott's Magazine* printed an article on the subject of negro folklore, containing rough outlines of some of the stories. This article gave me my cue, and the legends told by Uncle Remus are the result.

While setting type for *The Countryman* I contributed surreptitiously to the columns of that paper, setting my articles from the "case" instead of committing them to paper, and thus leaving no evidence of authorship. I supposed that this was a huge joke; but, as Mr. Turner read the proof of every line that went into his paper, it is probable that he understood the situation and abetted it. At any rate, he began to lend me books from his library, which comprised a collection of literature both large and choice. The books forming this library have since been dispersed, but there were at least five hundred volumes in the collection that modern book-lovers would pay high prices for.

This was the accidental beginning of a career that has been accidental throughout. It was an accident that I went to *The Countryman*, an accident that I wrote "Uncle Remus," and an accident that the stories put forth under that name struck the popular fancy. In some respects these accidents are pleasing, but in others they are embarrassing.

For instance, people persist in considering me a literary man, when I am a journalist and nothing else. I have no literary training, and know nothing at all of what is termed literary art. I have had no opportunity to nourish any serious literary ambition, and the probability is that if such an opportunity had presented itself I would have refused to take advantage of it.

Joel Chandler Harris.

SCORES AND TALLIES.

MR. FRANK GALTON somewhere tells an amusing story, since profusely copied by all the anthropologists, of how during his South-African wanderings he once wanted to buy a couple of sheep from an unsophisticated heathen Damara. Current coin in that part of the world is usually represented, it seems, by cakes of tobacco, and two cakes were the recognized market-price of a sheep in Damara-land at the time of Mr. Galton's memorable visit. So the unsuspecting purchaser chose a couple of wethers from the flock, and, naturally enough, laid down four pieces of tobacco to pay for them before the observant face of the astonished vender. The Damara eyed the proffered price with suspicious curiosity. What could be the meaning of this singular precipitancy? He carefully took up two pieces, and placed them in front of one of the sheep; then he took up the other two pieces with much wonder, and placed them in turn in front of the other. Goodness gracious, there must be magic in it! The sum actually came out even. The Damara, for his part, didn't like the look of it. This thing was evidently uncanny. How could the supernaturally clever white man tell beforehand that two and two made four? He felt about it, no doubt, as we ourselves should feel if a great mathematician were suddenly to calculate out for us *a priori* what we were going to have to-day for dinner, and how much exactly we owed the butcher. After gazing at the pat and delusive symmetry of the two sheep and the four cakes of tobacco for a brief breathing-space, the puzzled savage, overpowered but not convinced, pushed away the cakes with a gesture of alarm, took back his sheep to the bosom of his flock, and began the whole transaction over again *da capo*. He wasn't going to be cheated out of his two sound wethers by a theoretical white man who managed bargains for live sheep on such strictly abstract mathematical principles.

Now, to most of us the fact that two and two make four has been so familiar an idea from childhood upward that we can hardly realize

its true abstractness and its immense philosophical and mathematical value. But the poor heathen of Mr. Galton's story knew better: he saw that there was profound reasoning involved in it,—reasoning utterly beyond the level of his uncultivated South-African intelligence. That two apples and two apples make four apples, that two sheep and two sheep make four sheep, that two men and two men make four men,—those are mere matters of individual experience, which any man at any time can settle for himself experimentally upon his own ten fingers. But that two and two make four,—that is an abstraction from innumerable instances, containing within itself the root and basis of all subsequent mathematical science. The man who first definitely said to himself, Two and two make four, was a prehistoric Newton, a mute, inglorious, and doubtless very black-skinned but intelligent Laplace.

For just look at the extreme abstractness of the problem laid before the Damara's mind when the over-educated European calmly asked him to accept four cakes of tobacco, all in a lump, as proper payment for two individual sheep, severally valued at two cakes apiece. It is in reality a sum in proportion: "If one sheep is worth two cakes of tobacco, what will be the value of two sheep?" And the Damara had never been to school, or learned from Mr. Bernard Smith's arithmetic the right way to work a rule-of-three sum. It all looks so easy to us because we know the trick already. But how did we come to learn the trick? That is the real question. How did the white European and his ancestors manage to get so far ahead in counting of the unsophisticated heathen Damara?

I don't know how far the Damaras themselves can count; but the Chiquitos of America, a very low Indian tribe, couldn't count beyond one; for any larger sum than that, their simple language used terms of comparison alone,—as many as one's eyes, as many as a crow's toes, as many as the fingers on one hand, and so forth up to six or seven. The Tasmanians could get as far as two: beyond that they stopped short; their simple scheme of numeration was merely this: one, two, a great many. The Australian black-fellows in Queensland go a step further: they reckon thus: "one, two, two-one (3), two-two (4);" and after that they say, "more than two-two," meaning thereby an indefinite number. One South-African tribe easily beats this rudimentary record, and knows how to count up to ten. But eleven, or both hands and one over, it regards as the *ne plus ultra* of human computation. When a British detachment once marched against it, the scouts brought in word to the elders of the tribe that an immense army was coming to fight them,—
"an immense army; eleven white soldiers!"

On the other hand, some savages have really very advanced systems

of numeration ; for example, the Tongans, whose native numerals go up as far as one hundred thousand. Even this degree of proficiency, however, did not quite satisfy the devouring mathematical passion of Labillardière, who asked them what they called ten times that number, and so on, until he had finally made them give him names for all the subsequent decimal stages up even to one thousand billions. The polite Tongans, anxious to oblige a benevolent and generous scientific gentleman in so unimportant a matter, proceeded at once to supply him with words, which the unsuspecting explorer immediately wrote down, and duly printed as mathematical terms in the accounts of his travels. But—alas for the duplicity and the unscrupulousness of savages !—the supposed numerals in their higher ranges were really the rudest and naughtiest words in the Tongan language, with which, as missionaries subsequently discovered, the evil-disposed Polynesians had successfully imposed on the bland and child-like innocence of a scientific stranger. Such are the dangers of leading questions addressed in an imperfectly-understood tongue to the wicked minds of the children of nature. The children of nature promptly respond in the precise spirit of an East-End Arab.

The basis of all arithmetic, it may be safely asserted, lies in the primitive habit of counting on one's fingers. Not only do all children and all savages so count at the present day, not only do we all learn our first arithmetical lessons on that simple and natural portable abacus, but also all our most advanced numerical methods bear still upon their very face the evident marks of their evolution from the old mode of reckoning on the human hand. For the decimal system itself is a living result of the fact that every man (bar accidents) has ten fingers, and ten only. Nay, the very word "digits," by which we still express in the most abstract manner the symbols of the numbers, points back at last to the ten upheld black fingers of the original savage.

At the very first outset, indeed, the decimal system didn't have things all its own way. It was vigorously and strenuously opposed in the beginning by its vigesimal rival, the system that went in for counting by twenties, or, in other words, by fingers and by toes, not by fingers alone. Primitive man varied in his practice. Sometimes he counted his fingers only, and sometimes he counted his toes as well. From the one plan springs the system of reckoning by tens, from the other plan that of reckoning by scores or twenties.

Both systems are at bottom, of course, identical. You want to count a great many objects,—say, for example's sake, two hundred cocoa-nuts. You begin by taking one man, and counting a cocoa-nut for each one of his ten fingers ; after that, you set him aside. You have reckoned

ten, or one man ; or, if you like, you put a pebble aside to do duty for him : it stands for ten,—a decimal symbol. So you go on, making fingers and cocoa-nuts balance one another, till you have got to the end of the whole heap ; and you sum up your calculation briefly by saying that the cocoa-nuts equal twenty men. To this day, when we write 200 we are keeping up the memory of that very act. Our decimal system marks, as it were, one man, 10 ; two men, 20 ; three men, 30 ; four men, 40 ; and so on *ad infinitum*. The 0 stands in place of a man : it is the abstract sign of a completed series.

The vigesimal system of reckoning by scores proceeds in just the same manner, only it numbers fingers and toes together, and sets aside one man only when it has counted up to twenty. This, not the decimal system, was probably the original method of all the Northern nations,—certainly of all the Celtic peoples,—and traces of it still remain in our old English numerals threescore and fourscore, as well as in the habit of reckoning sheep and various other agricultural objects by twenties. In French, the two systems still live on amicably side by side. Up to *soixante* the reckoning is decimal ; but the old-fashioned *septante* has been completely ousted by *soixante-dix* (threescore and ten), while *octante* and *nonante-trois* give place to pure scoring in the case of *quatre-vingt* and *quatre-vingt-treize*.

Why did the habit of counting by tens finally get the better in all civilized societies of the still earlier habit of counting by twenties ? Simply, I believe, because civilized peoples tend more or less to wear shoes ; and shoes obviously interfere with freedom of action in getting at the human toes for purposes of calculation. Barefooted savages naturally enough reckon by twenties ; but booted civilization does its decorous counting by tens alone. Writing and the use of the slate and pencil strengthen the decimal impulse, once set on foot ; for you write with your fingers (unless you happen to rival Miss Biffin), not with your toes ; and our children nowadays, while they count on their fingers with great unanimity, would probably be shocked and scandalized at the barbaric notion of anything so rude as counting on their feet.

But why is twenty called a score ? Only because it represents a whole man, and is therefore scored or marked down on the tally or counting-stick as one person. In its original signification, of course, to score means merely to nick or cut a mark, especially on a short piece of wood. The word is etymologically much the same as scar ; and we still talk (when poetically inclined) of a mountain-side scored by the ceaseless torrents, or of a brow deeply scored by the ravages of time. In these degenerate days, to be sure, the score at cricket is duly entered in a ruled book, together with an analysis of the bowling, a record of

the overs, and a general commentary as to who was bowled, caught, or run out. But I can myself remember, in a very remote neighborhood, when I was a boy, seeing the score kept in the true primitive fashion by another boy seated on a fence, who cut a notch with his knife for every run on one of two sticks, green-barked and brown-barked, each representing one of the two sides.

A sort of sanctity was attached to the proceeding,—the sanctity that results from ancient usage. For that was the sort of swing that gave the score its present name: it was a real survival from an antique savagery. Just so the primitive arithmetician, while yet the whole world was young, counted up to twenty on a man's fingers and toes, and then made a notch on a stick to denote "one man up," or, in other words, twenty. It was a safer and easier way of reckoning than counting by men alone; because, in the first place, one man (for example, the reckoner himself) would serve as a numerator over and over again; and, in the second place, the score once marked on a stick remains forever, while the men are apt to get up and walk away, which is as disconcerting to the ardent arithmetician as the action of the hedgehogs in Alice's croquet to the enthusiastic player.


The survival of the practice of counting sheep by the score, in our country districts, very well illustrates this ancient Celtic vigesimal practice. When the new county voter (called in his non-political aspect Hodge or Giles) wishes to number a flock of sheep, he does so by first counting out twenty,—the counting itself being often done, not by the ordinary numerals, one, two, three, four, but by the old half-Celtic "rhyming score," "Eena, deena, dina, dus, Catla, weela, weila, wuss," and so forth, up to twenty. There, he has reached his higher unit, the score; in other words, one man, regarded as barefoot. So he makes a nick in a piece of wood, and begins his rhyming singsong over again. Thus he counts score after score, till he reaches at last the full number, say eight score and seventeen. At that he rests. He doesn't translate the numbers into the decimal notation: why should he? It would mean far less in his mind than his native numbers. Eight score and seventeen are to him a far more real and realizable amount than one hundred and seventy-seven. He sticks still to the vigesimal system. Twenty is for Giles the one true higher unit.

A tally in its origin was pretty much the same thing as a score, but it grows at last by usage and the courtesy of language into something rather different. It means in the final resort a piece of wood *taillé*,—that is to say, nicked or scored. But the French origin of the word points back to its being the offspring of the more civilized and Latinized decimal system, which replaced (for all save Giles and Hodge) our

old native English and Welsh method of counting by twenties. Moreover, it has now become inseparable from the very idea of a tally that it must needs tally with something or other. This sense of the word arises from the habit of giving the two parties to a bargain each a cut stick, on which the amount at issue between them was duly recorded by means of notches. As these sticks corresponded, or ought exactly to correspond, with one another, a tally came to be popularly thought of as necessarily implying correspondence. In the English exchequer—always conservative—such little bits of notched wood were given as receipts so late as the end of the eighteenth century; but at last they were accompanied by a written discharge as well, and only remained as a pure ceremonial and administrative survival.

It will further illustrate the absolute dependence of arithmetic upon the human fingers (including toes) if we recollect that in many savage languages the very words used to describe the abstract numbers are derived from the fingers or toes themselves. Thus, five in such a tongue will be the same word as "hand;" seven will be expressed by "one hand, two fingers;" and twenty will be put in the graphic form of "a whole man," or "one man finished."

People count long before they think of making definite signs or symbols for numbers, and when they begin to make symbols at all the earliest and simplest are mere long rows of notches or pebbles equal in sum to the number thought of. But in time picture-writing begins to develop itself; and then we get the earliest appearance of true ciphers. For example, the poor Indian of Pope and North America marked ten in his rude hieroglyphics—often rude in more senses than one—by a vague outline of a man, like that chalked on London walls by the surviving boy-savage,—a mere dot of a head, with a straight line for body, and two outstretched arms, ended by hands, standing on a pair of very open bow legs. The Roman numerals with which we are all so familiar, and which look so grand, learned, and awful when we get them in the developed form of MDCCCXLVIII., start in reality from an equally humble and childish origin. They are mere picture-writing. When the noble Roman of remote antiquity wanted to mark the number one, he drew a single straight line or digit to represent the uplifted forefinger. In our modern type we print it I. For two, he drew two digits, or II; for three, he wrote III; and four he represented, not by IV, which is a comparatively late modern innovation, but by the good old clock-dial symbol IIII. These, in fact, are nothing more than just the fingers of one hand. But how about five? Why should it be represented by the apparently meaningless symbol V? Simply because V is not V, but a rude hieroglyphic of one hand, the broad stroke

standing for the four fingers united, while the narrow one stands for the extended thumb. V, in fact, is nothing more than a very degenerate pictorial symbol, like the hand  still used by printers in certain circumstances to call special attention to a particular paragraph. As for X, that is usually represented as equivalent to two such hands set side by side; but this interpretation I believe to be erroneous. I think it much more likely (on the Indian analogy) to stand for "one man up," that is to say, ten, with a people who counted by fingers alone, or, in other words, employed a decimal notation. If this hypothesis be true, X represents a double of the Indian man-figure, with outstretched arms and legs like a colossus, the hand having disappeared entirely by disuse, as often happens in the evolution of what are called cursive hieroglyphics.

The other Roman numerals, L, C, D, and M, belong to a far later and more civilized period. I will not go fully here into the abstruse question of their origin and development, as learnedly traced by Canon Isaac Taylor in his interesting treatise: it will suffice, for most people, to mention briefly that they spring from discarded letters of the Greek alphabet, utilized by the practical Roman mind as numerals, and in two cases gradually twisted round by a false analogy into the semblance of C, the initial of *Centum*, and the delusive shape of M, the initial of *Mille*. This was distinctly clever of the primeval Roman; but he would probably have shrunk from so cruel a course had he foreseen the trouble that his procedure would give to subsequent archæologists, or the battles that would be waged by unborn nations over the origin and nature of his forgotten symbols.

Numerals like I, II, III, IIII, V, and X scarcely rise above the very lowest level of savage picture-writing. They recall the records of the noble red men of the West and the modern Esquimaux, who when they wish to state a number in writing do it, so to speak, as the logic-books say, "by simple enumeration," putting down an exact picture of the persons or objects involved in the transaction. Thus, the well-known chronicle of the achievements of Wingemund, chief of the Leni Lenape Indians, who attacked the English settlements in 1762, proceeds entirely on such a direct numerical basis. The chronicle was cut into the bark of a tree in Ohio more than a century since, and it proceeds after the following straightforward manner. Twenty-three braves went upon the war-path: therefore they are represented by twenty-three straight lines, bent slightly forward, to indicate progression. For ten days they marched through the forest: so the sun is displayed (with the very same broad good-humored face he still wears in English caricature) as having surmounted ten lines, each of which marks the horizon. They attacked

three English forts,—shown by three square bastions ; and one of them contained a couple of trading-stores,—exhibited as small oblongs within the fortifications. Ten vanquished enemies, each very much like an X with or without a head to it, stand on one side. Six of them, however, are headless, and represent the scalped. Four have small round knobs on top, and were therefore, doubtless, taken prisoners. This is, as it were, the raw material of the art-writing from which hieroglyphs, and alphabets, and numerical systems were finally evolved.

Still, the Roman V and X differ considerably, in one respect, from such Indian picture-writing, and show a corresponding advance in the direction of the numerals. They each represent not a particular object, but a number in the abstract. "*V homines*" means five men ; "*X homines*," ten men. It is not necessary to put pictures of the object five or ten times repeated : the figure alone sufficiently expresses the qualifying number. On the other hand, few people, probably, have any adequate idea of the great difficulties in which arithmetic would be involved were it not for the happy invention of the Arabic numerals. Here is a very simple little sum in addition put Roman fashion. The reader will find it "a nice amusement," as the model papa always tells his daughters, to work it out as it stands without having recourse to Arabic notation :

MDCXLVIII
MCCXLV
DCCXXXIX
MDCCCLXXXIV

None of these figures reaches two thousand, and yet what a hopeless task to sum them up without an abacus ! But that is, indeed, a small matter. Here are two better tests of the impossibility of arithmetic without Arabic notation. Multiply (all in Roman figures) MDCCXLIV by DCLXXXVI, and divide MCCXLIII by XLV. Nothing could be simpler than those two sums ; and yet it requires considerable intellect and very close attention to work them out on paper with the Roman symbols.

The fact is, an abacus, which is at bottom merely a form of score, or tally, was absolutely indispensable for arriving at anything like a high arithmetical result before the invention of the Arabic numerals. The only way to work out a big sum was then to take one lot of pebbles or cowries to mark the units, another lot for the tens, a third lot for the hundreds, and a fourth for the thousands. If one wished to sum up a large number, say to add 2347 to 8929, one put separately into each heap two pebbles and eight, three pebbles and nine (which necessitated

a remove or "carrying"), four pebbles and two, and nine pebbles and seven (carry again). No one heap, of course, could ever exceed ten: when it did, nine pebbles were taken out, and one was removed to the next heap. Observe how this primitive method of reckoning has colored all our subsequent arithmetical language and arithmetical conceptions. Just as digit means a finger, and points back to the period when men reckoned on their two hands alone, so calculus means a pebble, and points back to the period when they reckoned with little heaps of stones, or cowries. To calculate is merely to heap up pebbles, and the differential calculus itself is the way we manipulate the small marbles in order to produce certain high mathematical results. Even the very phrase "to carry one," "to carry two," still used by our school-children, retains a memory of the time when ten pebbles were taken from the heap of units as soon as it reached ten or more, and one of them was added in compensation to the other pile immediately above it.

The abacus is a device for making the pebble system more systematic and more respectable. By stringing colored balls on a wire frame, and making the white mean units, the red tens, the green hundreds, and the brown thousands, it is possible to add or multiply large numbers in a way practically all but impossible with the Roman numerals. Besides, this plan had the advantage of being, so to speak, automatic. You added tens and hundreds and thousands to the various rows without counting at all; and then at the end you read off the total according to the number of brown, green, and white balls on the different courses. The abacus substituted a mechanical device for a mental process: it made arithmetic an affair of the eye, not an affair of the brain or the intellect.

Still, no great advance in the mysteries of mathematics could ever be expected from arithmeticians who had to use such very rough-and-ready methods of procedure as these. The Greek notation was even clumsier than the Roman, consisting, as it did, of the letters of the alphabet, mostly in their alphabetical order, as if in English A meant one, B two, C three, and U twenty-one. The first step towards the establishment of the simple modern decimal system was made by the Romans, who at last bethought themselves of writing the letters standing for the unit, the ten, the hundred, and the thousand, with the number of units, of tens, of hundreds, and of thousands,—the coefficient, as mathematicians playfully term it,—written small on top of the significant letters. Thus, 2459 would be represented on this system by $\overset{\text{II}}{\text{M}}\overset{\text{IV}}{\text{C}}\overset{\text{V}}{\text{X}}\overset{\text{I}}{\text{I}}$. The man who saw his way to this great improvement was well on the track of the Arabic system.

But a fatal difficulty stood in the way of his further progress. If

we write $\overline{\text{MCXI}}$, it soon becomes apparent to the meanest understanding (after which remark the judicious reader will hardly venture to pretend he doesn't see it) that we may safely omit the M, the C, the X, and the I, and leave the 2459 to stand on their own legs, their position alone sufficiently expressing their value as units, tens, hundreds, and thousands. As the mathematician would put it once more, we may neglect the serial terms and let the coefficients alone stand in their places. But when we write $\overline{\text{MCXI}}$ we cannot thus abbreviate into iiivvix , because each digit of units, tens, hundreds, and thousands is not represented by a single symbol. We might, indeed, get over that difficulty somewhat by putting points between each series, thus: $\text{ii}.\text{iv}.\text{v}.\text{ix}.$; and the number so expressed might then be read 2459. But this is at best a clumsy device, and in practice the points would be always going wrong, and reducing our arithmetic to the same hopeless muddle as the weekly books in the hands of our wives and daughters.

What is really needed, then, is that each unit from one to nine should be separately expressed by a single symbol. What that symbol happens to be doesn't at all matter to the general principle: a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, would do quite as well as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. As a matter of fact, our existing numerals, called Arabic, are a compromise between the two systems of picture-writing and alphabetic signs. They come to us, like the beginnings of most mathematical science, from the remote and mysterious East; and they make their first appearance under hardly-recognizable forms in the Indian cave-inscriptions of the first and second centuries. One, two, and three are there represented by parallel bars, placed sideways instead of lengthways, and standing, of course, for our old friends the human fingers. It is easy enough to see how —, =, ≡ are readily converted into 1, 2, 3, the first being made upright on the analogy of the Roman I, and the other two being hastily run together with connecting lines into 2 and 3. The other units, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9, are the initials or most prominent letters of the name of each corresponding number in the language of the inscriptions. We might make a similar English table thus: —, =, ≡, F, V, S, E, I, N. The immense advantage of the new numerals lies, of course, in the fact that each of them represents a single unit by a single symbol, and so allows us to express sums like 2, 347, 859, 427, and so forth, in a way unattainable under any other system. Nay, our symbolic conceptions are thus allowed even to outrun the resources of language, and the astronomer and the mathematician now habitually deal with strings of figures which it would be impossible for them so much as to express in words.

Most things, unfortunately, are called by wrong names. Our exist-

ing ciphers, though originally Indian, are now universally described as Arabic, because they came to the western world from India and Africa through the mercantile medium of the Spanish Arabs. From Spain they spread to the European nations, though not without considerable opposition by the way, such as invariably testifies to the goodness and soundness of every genuine human improvement. Whenever you hear a loud popular clamor raised against anything as wicked or foolish, you may be pretty sure it will really turn out in the end a valuable invention: what everybody says must be wrong. This simple conclusion flows as a matter of course from the familiar principle, first definitely formulated by "poor Carlyle," that there are so many billion people in the world, mostly fools. Paynim numerals met with little favor, accordingly, from the mediæval merchant. The bankers of Florence were forbidden, on the verge of the fifteenth century, from employing these dangerous Saracen signs in any of their account-books; and the University of Padua (so very like our own Oxford) ordained that its stationer should keep a list of books for sale with the prices marked, "not in ciphers, but in plain letters." The hapless modern purchaser rather desires, on the contrary, that prices should be marked, not in letters, but in plain ciphers. It is noticeable that the very word cipher, here employed, is itself Arabic, and its progeny includes not only the familiar French *chiffre*, but also, through the Italian *zefiro*, the much less immediately recognizable derivative, zero. Arabic numerals were at first confined in use to mathematical works; they were then employed for the paging of books; and it was not till the middle of the fifteenth century that they first found their way with any security into general commercial society.

It is curious to reflect that the whole decimal system itself, with all its faults and shortcomings and awkwardnesses, has been foisted upon us as a pure survival by the mere accident that man happens to have five fingers on each hand. Counting by tens is a legacy of savagery. If mathematicians had now to devise, *de novo*, a system of numeration,—if a new and universal French Revolution were to sweep away at one fell swoop all records of the past, and set humanity upon its legs once more on a *tabula rasa* of arts and sciences,—there can be no doubt that eight would be the number immediately hit upon by the worshippers of reason as the best possible basis for an arithmetical series. Eight would then be written 10, and 64 would be written 100, while the symbols 8 and 9 would be entirely discarded from the reformed arithmetic. For eight is a good square number, divisible all round, by two and by four, and halving evenly till it reaches unity, by the successive stages of four, two, and one; whereas ten lands you at once in five

and two-and-a-half, which are useless and impossible quantities to deal with practically. But the accident of savage man's predilection for counting on his fingers has burdened us for all time with this clumsy and awkward decimal system; while only the lucky fact that the Greeks and Romans wore shoes has prevented us from the still more terrible habit of reckoning everything by scores or twenties.

To go a step further back, as an ingenious American philosopher has pointed out, mankind uses decimals instead of octonals to-day because in the progress from the finned fish to the four-limbed amphibian the number of fin-rays on each limb happened to be reduced from eight or ten to five only. Hence most of the higher animals have five fingers or five toes on each extremity; and man in this respect conforms strictly to his early pre-human arboreal ancestor. If that ancestor had had only four toes, like so many quadrupeds, we might now count by eights or by sixteens; but the accident of his possessing five digits on each limb has saddled us forever with the foolish custom of reckoning everything either by tens or by twenties. Our most advanced mathematics bear obviously on their very face the marks of their irrational and savage origin, and more remotely recall the evolution of the race from a many-rayed mud-haunting amphibious progenitor.

Grant Allen.

A VACANT HOUSE.

"WE must do something," said Flora, her face strained into anxious curves.

"So you've said twenty-five times. I counted," responded Kelsie Chitwood.

"Well, what shall we do?"

"Pour our substance lavishly into the coffers of the best hotel."

"We can't, Kelsie; we daren't."

"Then go on following up advertisements and hunting a cheap boarding-place."

"There aren't any really cheap places where we can go."

"Oh, don't repeat so much," besought Kelsie. "My feet and heart and head are aching a trio. This town isn't half as good a capital for the State as Madison would be. We can go back to Madison and say we changed our minds about elocution- and music-lessons, because they don't know as much here as we do at home."

"No, ma'am," said Flora, setting her mouth squarely. "I won't give up."

"I will," said Kelsie. "I'll sit down here on the curbstone and be taken up for vagrancy. We've been nothing but tramps since early morning. There's nobody cares whether we ever get housed or not,—not even the music-professor or elocution-woman, who expect to get our hard-earned ducats out of us."

"I never would have believed a person would have such desperate times to get settled in a big town."

"Where there are so many houses to let, too," said Kelsie. "I've seen agents' cards on hundreds of them since morning. Look at this palatial brick, blind-eyed, shut up like a jail. Carved walnut vestibule doors; and they're not locked, either. Let's get inside them and sit down with our backs to the front doors, snug as mice in a cupboard, and rest ourselves."

"It's getting very late in the afternoon," said Flora, consulting anxiously the globe of a silver watch which she had worn tucked in the front of her dress since she was old enough to be trusted with the heirloom. "We must do something, quick."

"Twenty-six times," counted Kelsie.

The older girl's disturbed face continued to pucker around the eyes. Her complexion had the mature brown tint of withering golden-rod, and a perceptible fuzz extended down her cheeks beneath her ears. She had good, straight-gazing dark eyes, and a tailor-made trimness of apparel. In one hand she carried a small bag, and under the arm above it a strapped silk umbrella.

Kelsie was very pretty, and gave an impression of elegance. Her immense sombre eyes and golden foam of hair were filmed from the vulgar gaze by a gray veil so tied over a hat of projecting brim that it made only an enchanting transparency. Through this Kelsie's clear pallor and lovely features attracted every passing eye. Her long furred wrap outlined a soft, small figure modelled for petting and protection rather than for muscular enterprise and wiry push. She dragged one little foot also, as if habitual lameness aggravated her present exhaustion.

"Let's go into this big empty house and stay to-night, Flora," she suggested, sincerely. "I just thought of it. That wouldn't cost us any money, and to-morrow we're sure to get some boarding-place."

"Oh, talk sense!" exclaimed Flora. "You might just as well say, let us sit on the curb till morning."

"No, I mightn't. For the curbstone is out-doors, and in the house we should be under shelter. We could surely find something to make

a fire of, and spread this big shawl in my shawl-strap on the floor, and lay our heads on our bags and sleep. We needn't bother about our trunks at the dépôt."

"Or about any supper or breakfast," said Flora.

"We can buy something to eat right over there," suggested Kelsie, indicating a bakery in the distance. "I think it would be splendid. Nobody ever thought of such a grand thing before."

"Except some baby trying to handle the moon," observed Flora, her contempt growing as Kelsie warmed to the subject. "I wouldn't allow myself to do such a dishonorable thing."

"Dishonorable!" said Kelsie. "It would be just a nice, neat, smart plan. Edward Everett Hale—*Reverend* Edward Everett Hale, lofty ladyship—has a story about some nice people who lost their baggage and money, and the young lady stayed all night in a church. She got herself locked in without the sexton's knowing it, and the man brought the key and let her out next morning. I think it showed enormous resource."

"We should show enormous resource," said Flora, "if we could walk into a fastened house. Shall we break a window, or go down chimney?"

"Don't you see the agent's office-address on that card? I know just where it is, and I'll get the key of him and be back in half an hour. Two street-car fares won't be much to fling away on such a venture."

"Kelsie Chitwood! What will you tell him?"

"Flora Baum! I'll tell him I want to look at the house. It won't scare him. He probably has applicants for rents once in a while."

"But we don't want to rent a house."

"We do for one night. You haven't got a bit of soar in you, Flora; and you were going to lead the expedition. If I were going to be a lecturer about equal suffrage, and so on, I'd try to get out of a few old ruts in the beginning. It scares you to death to do a thing nobody happened to think of before."

"It doesn't," claimed Flora. "But I don't see any sense in it."

"Do you see sense, then, in beginning to give way? If I give an inch I know I shall break down and have to go back to my step-father's before I know enough about music to make me independent. Maybe you want to collapse down on your uncle's folks and teach school and pinch two years more for an outfit and money enough to carry out your plans."

"Kelsie, you can say very cutting things. But we won't stand here
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fussing. Stopping at a hotel one night," said Flora, still hesitating and arguing, "isn't going to eat us up."

"What I have in my portemonnaie is part of my blood and lifetime, and I'm going to fight over every drop of it."

"Why don't you say honestly you've just made up your mind to cut a caper?" exclaimed Flora, walking on.

Kelsie hurried beside her, and flew off at a cross-street.

"Well, walk as far as that bakery; but don't go any farther," she insisted.

"I never heard of such a silly trick!" grumbled Flora. She made other remarks to herself, poking the pavement with her umbrella, while she sauntered on without Kelsie.

The bakery happened to be a very clean one, full of appetizing, cakey odors. An apple-cheeked man, smiling as if in perpetual recollection of Christmas, stood behind the counter. He answered all Flora's inquiries with gentle eagerness, and told her he had cider which would keep sweet as long as there was a drop of it, because three pounds of stemmed raisins had been put into the barrel with it.

Dusk was descending with the smoke of great chimneys when Kelsie came back and held up the key to her friend. She found Flora with supper all spread for two, within a calico curtain where the apple-cheeked man sometimes served lunches.

"Ain't this cosy!" she exclaimed, sitting down under gaslight to currant-buns, cider, and buttered rolls. "We might come back here to breakfast; only when I propose to rent a great, huge house I don't like to take all my meals out."

"Did you tell such a story, Kelsie?"

"Oh, now, don't preach. I grow aged when you begin to strain after perfection, Flora. The agent was just as willing as he could be to let us look at the house. It rents at only fifty dollars a month. I told him you probably couldn't go over it until morning."

"That I couldn't!"

"I said 'mamma.' It's all right. He was a great big pussy-cat of a man, who came purring at me through his whiskers. I was very dignified,—quite above his sort. And in the morning the house won't suit at all, and I'll take the key back."

"Quite correct. And it won't suit this evening, either."

"Rolls we can take, and some prepared chocolate," pursued Kelsie. "I would like corn and a popper; but people can't be princely the very eve of moving in."

Thus remonstrating and resisting, Flora returned with Kelsie along the dusky street, ascended the stone steps, and stood within the huge brick

house's vestibule. The key let them in. Flora whisked behind the door with a guilty sensation while Kelsie locked it again.

"The house is probably full of ghosts," she threatened, speaking low to escape echoes.

"I believe all the folks' shadows that ever fell on these walls are here yet," responded Kelsie.

With perfect understanding they then ceased to talk while exploring the lower floor. On the right-hand side of the hall three great parlors in glittering white paint had all their leaves of communication open. The dining-room showed smeared wall-paper, and beyond this Kelsie did not care to go; but Flora cautiously glanced through the kitchen, and turned the cellar-key to listen downwards to the hollow silence under the house.

They then went up-stairs, their feet seeming to make a startling hoof-like clatter, and peered between dirty shutter-slats at the street-lamps twinkling distantly. The upper rooms were arranged on each side of a hall with a square regularity characterizing all domiciles of this house's date.

"We daren't camp in a front room," said Kelsie: "our light would show through the windows."

"It will show through the side- or back-windows just the same."

"Not if we pick a wise place," declared Kelsie. So they tiptoed about to keep the echoes still, and opened and closed again every offering door. The chambers were high and spacious, variously tinted as to wall-papers, but each gaping like a cavern to engulf wanderers.

The girls decided to stay in a side-room where there was a grate, and tall folding-doors securely fastened between them and a row of windows looking upon the street. Dust lay thick upon the floor and imitation-marble mantel, but it was a mere part of the general duskiness until they had a fire kindled. Having quite explored the premises, they went down the back stairs, ventured beyond kitchen and store-room into the fuel-house, and scraped up kindling and pieces of coal quite enough to overburden a rusty dish-pan left discarded there.

They struck matches and built their fire, and Kelsie rubbed the mantel and the floor in front of the grate with newspaper. She unbuckled her shawl-strap, spread down her thick travelling-shawl, and she and Flora sat down before the rushing flame.

"That fire won't last all night," said Flora, looking at her watch.

"Then let's toast our cheese," said Kelsie, reaching for the provisions they had brought with them, "and eat up the pop-corn balls now. A hat-pin is awfully nice for a toasting-fork, when any one is as nice and neat about a hat-pin as I am. But first let's straighten our change."

Each girl seriously took up her portemonnaie, summed up and halved the expense of their meal, and Kelsie handed Flora the exact number of nickels and pennies which were her due, less one street-car fare. This transaction being completed, they took off their hats, and basked and munched. Chimes struck in the distance, and at intervals a watchman's whistle came with startling blare through the walls.

"How do you feel now?" inquired Flora, indicating that all blame of the adventure still rested on the woman who tempted her.

"I feel as if my lame foot had been overworked to-day," responded Kelsie. "But I am glad we came. For you aren't afraid of anything at all, are you, Flora?"

"No," said Flora, shortly. "We locked the door the last time we came in, didn't we?"

"Tight. Do you think we'd better take the key out of the lock?"

"No. Better leave it in."

"I wish," said Kelsie, hitching towards Flora, and leaning down in her lap, "I could quit thinking every evening about that hung man who jumped on board a freight-train and came down through the skylight. There he sat and rode for twenty miles, scaring the men in the caboose stiff, and then he stepped off and ran up a bank, dragging his rope. Sometimes I do believe he is going to make me see him: I feel as if he could step in through any walls and I would have to look at him."

"It would be a good scheme," suggested Flora, "to stretch ourselves out and take a doze while we can. We shall have to be up pretty early to keep from freezing and escape having this business inquired into."

"But isn't it like returning straight to nature?" exclaimed Kelsie, willingly bunching up a pillow from the corner of her shawl. "I love to astonish myself with what I can dare and do, once in a while."

They talked some time longer, lying face to face, but with their eyes resting on the comfortable fire. Still the watchman's rattle came at regular intervals, and the long call of trains, interspersed with passing laughter and the faint spat of feet upon pavements. Saturated with warmth and weariness, Kelsie felt herself beginning to sleep, and only opened her eyes once more, lifting her eyebrows also with the effort, to see how funny and aimless Flora looked with her mouth relaxing open.

Whole hours of oblivion are nothing when we wake in the night: so it seemed to Kelsie she had but completely closed her eyes when somebody tickled her ear, besieging it with unwelcome breath. She murmured a remonstrance, drawing back, until the annoyance was able to shape itself into words:

"Kelsie, what is that noise?"

"What noise?" responded Kelsie, sitting up wide awake, and seeing with astonishment how dim the fire was.

Some creature was walking stealthily up and down the hall. The footfalls were distinct in front of their door, and sufficiently perceptible at either end of the unseen sentinel's beat.

"It's been going on so for half an hour," whispered Flora. "I didn't try to wake you until it began to turn our knob."

"Oh, Flora!" gasped Kelsie. "Then it's something with hands, and not a cat!"

"Did you certainly lock the front door?"

"Surely, and brought the key away in my pocket."

"I know the back part of the house is fast, for I fastened it myself. We are in a nice box! We daren't even raise a window and call to the watchman. And how are we going to get out of this house past that—whatever it is?"

"It will go away in the morning," shivered Kelsie.

Flora opened her watch, held it down close to the hearth, and indicated that her friend should look. "It's five o'clock now. This is morning." A bleak diminution of darkness, which was sifting through the windows or growing in the air, confirmed her words.

"I'd rather it was five o'clock than twelve," breathed Kelsie. "A great many of one's troubles do take themselves off in daytime. I've often felt tired of living, but I should despise to end my career in a wood-cut in the *Police Gazette*, with an empty house for my background. Two beautiful young ladies found killed. It goes so softly: it's a woman, Flora,—some sleep-walker or lunatic." She fell upon Flora with a tight grip as the door-knob was turned and shaken.

"This is horrid!" said Flora. "But don't be scared to death: that will do no good."

"Hear it hissing through the key-hole! Oh, Flora, let us jump out of the window. We'd better die that way than have it get at us."

"Kelsie Chitwood, if I had known you had so little self-control I never should have started away from home with you. You can't escape the consequences of your own actions in this world, and there's no use trying. We have to face the thing some time, and, now it's light enough to see, I'm going to open the door."

"If you do I'll jump on the mantel!"

"There's only one of it and two of us. It's probably some prowling negro, half drunk. You take my umbrella and I will club my bag, if we have to defend ourselves."

"Oh, Flora, you are so brave, and I am so deathly faint!"

"I'm going to open the door," repeated Flora, fanning the young girl with her hat, her jaws set resolutely and her eyes shining. "You'll probably come out of the scrape with flying colors, as you usually do, and I'll have to do the dragging and take the bumps."

"I suppose I do deserve to die for my various sins and shortcomings," gulped Kelsie. "And I'll stand as much as you can. You'll see that."

"Give me the key to the front door," said Flora. "Have you got all your things? We'll turn this lock softly, and wait until it's at the upper end of the hall, then make a dash and get down-stairs. You run ahead: I'll keep between you and it: your foot isn't strong. I'll be there to unlock the door by the time you reach it."

"I won't take any such advantage," declared Kelsie, in white heroism. "We'll walk out abreast and face it together."

"All right," assented Flora, speaking with the indifference of a condemned man standing on a fatal drop.

They were conscious of street-noises and broadening daylight as wholesome helps against their terror. The impalpable perils which seem to crowd upon us from depths of space and make us cower upon ourselves, in turn cower from us when we proceed against them.

Flora opened the door wide, and Kelsie walked out abreast of her, facing an old gray man, stooping in scant clothing topped by a dressing-gown. His lip drooped and trembled, and he had a piteous, searching look in his dimmed eyes.

"I want Hannah," he besought the girls, clasping his hands with a dramatic gesture, as if appealing to a jury. "Why have you locked her in that room away from me?" And then he broke down and sobbed out loud, with the knotty, unfluent agony of a man's outcries.

"Oh, the poor dear!" exclaimed Kelsie, all her rigidness relaxing to the soft attitudes and compassion of a child. "And, Flora, he must be chilled nearly to death."

About twelve hours later the two girls sat at the cosiest of hotel tables, with the evening paper between them, waiting for their dinner-order to be filled. The cheer, the brilliant light, the white-clad waiters and swift clatter of china and silver, exhilarated Kelsie. She looked pretty and exclusive and untroubled by worldly circumstance, as she put the tip of her finger on a paragraph and said to Flora, "Here it is."

"Judge Snellbaker, who disappeared from his home last week, was found this morning in an empty house on Pennsylvania Avenue by a Mrs. Baum and her daughter, from Madison, who were looking through

the house with the intention of renting it. It has been known several years that the judge was failing in health, but it now appears that his mind was completely shattered by his wife's recent death. He probably left home in search of her, and by some means got access to the Pennsylvania Avenue property, which the judge's family once occupied. The exposure, which might have been fatal to a man of his age and physical condition, has affected him but little.

"The large reward offered by his family in advertising for him was at first refused by Mrs. Baum and her daughter, though they were at length compelled reluctantly to accept it."

Flora put up a resentful lip as she read.

"I suppose it's just as nearly correct as the enterprising journalist ever gets anything," commented Kelsie. "He couldn't know with what reluctant joy we were compelled to gather in a competence which will clear our entire way for us."

"Mrs. Baum!" said Flora. "And when the Madison papers take it up, how am I going to explain my intention of renting a palatial house? It is a perfect tangle, that we shall never get out of."

"So are most of one's experiences in this world," said Kelsie. "You ought to be thankful if you get more good than bad out of anything. The uncertainty of what is coming is one of the charms of life."

M. H. Catherwood.

PATIENCE IN ART.

LEAVES.

NATURE, the greatest painter, wrought at these
 From early April till November frost:
 Although her work was done with silent ease,
 Think what a space those forms and colors cost!

MAN.

Nature takes twenty years to mould a man
 Into the goodliest, most transcendent cast;
 And grudgest thou to toil thy paltry span,
 When soul-like marble will the flesh outlast?

Charlotte Fiske Bates.

OUR MONTHLY GOSSIP.

LET Mr. Howells argue as he will, few of us, publishers or readers, regard the Novelist of the Future as unnecessary or impossible. Instead of despairing, we wish that his dispensation may be at hand. We certainly need him, if "The Bostonians" is a sample of the antiseptic cotton batting that is to be served to us as food. It does not poison us, but a very little of it satisfies. Perhaps we do not need the "Literary Centre," and indeed may not be looking in the right direction for the coming one. We may be like the people who turned to the east to see the first beam of sunrise, and not one of us wise enough to look to the west and catch the ray-flash on the glittering peak of a prophetic steeple. It is not well to be so positive about Bethlehem that we ignore Nazareth.

When we come to formulate our demands of the Coming American Novelist, we will agree that he must be native-born. His ancestors may come from where they will, but we must give him a birthplace and have the raising of him. Still, the longer his family has been here the better he will represent us. Suppose he should have no country but ours, no traditions but those he has learned here, no longings apart from us, no future except in our future—the orphan of the world, he finds with us his home. And with all this, suppose he refuses to be fused into that grand conglomerate we call the "American type." With us, he is not of us. He is original, he has humor, he is tender, he is passive and fiery, he has been taught what we call justice, and he has his own opinion about it. He has suffered everything a poet, a dramatist, a novelist need suffer before he comes to have his lips anointed. And with it all he is in one sense a spectator, a little out of the race. How would these conditions go towards forming an original development? In a word, suppose the coming novelist is of African origin? When one comes to consider the subject, there is no improbability in it. One thing is certain,—our great novel will not be written by the typical American. After a time the Yankee type will be replaced by some new combination from the effect of our life on the nations swarming to our shores; and, as far as nationality goes, The Novel might as well then be written by the African as by this new combination. Thus far he has given us the only national music we have ever had. Indeed, we may go further and assert that the plantation-songs are the only melodies in our day that are not growths from Handel or Beethoven. They are far more original than Wagner, because he is a legitimate result of progress in logical lines. Given Gluck and Beethoven, and Wagner is certain after a time. Of course by "plantation-songs" such music as Foster's "Old Folks at Home" is not meant, but the song of the African himself, not the one written for him and then sung by the white people. Whether the peculiar swing and rhythm of his melodies is a vague recollection of Africa or the offspring of his civilization, it is distinctive in musical history.

The African is also a natural story-teller. He tells a fable with as much point as *Æsop*, and with far more humor. He hits at folly, and laughs at his victim as the arrow flies. Perhaps his wit is more complete because he knows his limits and is content to talk of what he understands. He never goes abroad

for victims, but finds them at his fireside. That the friend who is hit laughs the most proves that the best wit is genial.

Observe how different are the falsehoods of Bridget from those of the African. The daughter of Erin lies because she thinks it to her advantage. She may desire to conciliate, to conceal, to cajole, to shirk, it may be cowardice or kindness, but she means to benefit herself, if only in your good opinion. The African needs no such incentives. He may hope the lie will serve a purpose, but the chances are that he lies simply because he had a good chance and he likes to improve it. A well-devised and well-worked-up lie pleases his very bones. He tells one unblushingly and frankly, and does not mind being detected. He owns up with hearty good will, and admires the "smartness" that sees through him. Every physician knows this little idiosyncrasy of the race, and when he finds one of the babies dying with symptoms of opium-poison he goes to the point at once, and asks how much paregoric was given. A direct question like this makes a short cut, and so saves time. If he asked whether paregoric was given at all, he would meet a quick denial, because the African woman is much too shrewd to "give herself away" in answer to such an obtuse question. And the African will take a great deal of pains with his imaginative efforts. He does not give them to you crude and bald. He is capable of working them up with dramatic effect, and often takes much trouble when his object—when he has one—could be secured by easier methods. He likes to play a *rôle*. In slavery days "George Hart" was content with his father's name on week-days and about the plantation, but his "young miss" was asked to mark his Sunday handkerchief with the more aristocratic name of his owner. On Sunday he wanted the church and the neighborhood to understand that he represented the Lee and not the Hart family. And just so the Northern negro will act his part. I am sure that a certain tall and most valuable colored gentleman of my acquaintance had little reason to complain of the people who paid him,—I can hardly say his employers. He said he had not, and indeed often assured "the madame" that he had no fault to find with his family, and that he told his friends so. He certainly had liberty. He had not merely his "days out," but divers kinds of business, such as his club or his laundress, called him abroad every night, until his mistress made the arrangement with him that he should stay at home the third Monday in every month, so that she could go to her sociable feeling that the house still had a head. One Thursday night this young man was, as usual, out, when a friend called to see him in great haste. The friend, who lived a mile away, had received a telegram from Baltimore intended for Philip, whose present address "was not known to his family in that city." The message brought the news that Philip's mother was very ill, and he must come to her at once. The friend had hurried to tell Philip, and was a good deal worried at not finding him. He had, however, shown his prudence by leaving the telegram at home, "because," as he said, "if I had found Philip I could have told him its contents, but if he goes to my house, as he does nearly every Thursday night, the family might have got it mixed." He hurried off, hoping to catch Philip somewhere while it was yet early. A little after ten o'clock Philip came home. He went directly to the kitchen, and, gently whistling, busied himself about the work of getting ready for the night.

There never was a man more stunned by bad news, and never a more considerate servant. He borrowed a latch-key, and at once went to his friend's house. When at midnight he returned, he had seen the telegram, had secured a time-table, had engaged a competent woman to take his place, and was cheerfully

melancholy after the manner of an undertaker. He felt his personal sorrow and his personal importance. Early in the morning Philip was up, and he left shining silver and well-blackened grates when he departed. But when he reached Baltimore he was too late, and he saw crape flying at the door as he approached the house. There was, however, a mistake in the telegram, the sick woman having been his grandmother. "Still," as he plaintively said, with tears in his eyes, "she brought us up, my sister and me, and she was like my mother to me." She had died with Philip's name on her lips. She asked again and again for him, and when his sister arrived from Washington, a few hours before her death, it only increased her desire to see "her boy." The old lady had been a property-holder, and she left Philip two small houses in Baltimore. Naturally, Philip thought of her no little after his return from her funeral, and he told his mistress many touching stories of her goodness to him when he was a child.

The point of this story? Simply this: Philip had no grandmother, he had received no telegram, he had been heir to no property. He had not been to Baltimore. The one grain of truth in the whole performance was that he had gone to a funeral out of town. Now, what induced these two men to concoct such a tale and act such a farce? Philip knew he could have readily obtained permission to go to the funeral, especially as he provided a competent substitute. It was simply the African's love of playing a part. He invented his little domestic tragedy, posed in it, and gratified his inherent dramatic instinct. He left no detail unfinished, and manufactured no improbabilities. He was the devoted and grateful son receiving his reward, mourning his benefactor. In my brief intercourse with Philip he was rich in similar inventions. He went to the sea-shore for a day, and came back full of delight, but said he could not understand why he had never been before. In the whole story he told of the day's adventures he did not interpolate a word of truth; and as for his never having seen the sea, he had been a waiter at Long Branch for five summers. But in all these tales there was a fine consistency. His inventions were never malicious, and he always posed as an innocent, appreciative hero. He told the neighbors that he had lived with the family fifteen years, and much credit did he give them for their kindness to him: they had been as good to him as had his grandmother!

Neither the Anglo-Saxon nor the Latin would take an equal delight with the African in such deceptions. The African is like a child. It is not enough for him to invent, he also wants to play his inventions. They are so purely acts of the imagination that he does not feel that morality is involved, and he does not care if he is detected. He is the actor, you the audience; if you think him in earnest he is proved a good player.

In Dumas we can see just such race-characteristics,—his fertility in plots, his daring yet possible situations. "Two and two," he cries, "make five!" and in a brilliant stroke he shows you the five. Do you doubt it? The proof rests with you. Is not that a figure five? Is it a three, a four? do you call it a *ten*? Of what use is it to say that of course you do call it ten? he only laughs the more. That he used other men's brains and wore the laurels himself is just what would have delighted James to do. It is not enough to do a good thing, to tell a good tale, to bamboozle an audience, unless one has a *title-rôle*.

With this pronounced personality, this originality, with such quickness to see and readiness to tell, with such intense power in living his own life, why should not this man, who has suffered so much, who is so easy to amuse, so full

of his own resources, and who is yet undeveloped, why should he not some day soon tell a story that shall interest, amuse us, stir our hearts, and make a new epoch in our literature?

Yet farther: I have used the generic masculine pronoun because it is convenient; but Fate keeps revenges in store. It was a woman who, taking the wrongs of the African as her theme, wrote the novel that awakened the world to their reality, and why should not the coming novelist be a woman as well as an African? She—the woman of that race—has some claims on Fate which are not yet paid up.

"ANGRY? He is frantic,—he is mad." This is an answer which I remember hearing years ago to a question as to a person's state of wrath; and the phrase aptly describes the attitude which many lovers of Goethe's great drama assumed when the Lyceum version of "Faust" first revealed "the nakedness of its *cui bono*," etc. There is, to be sure, a very sufficient and to the manager a very satisfying answer to the question, *Cui bono?* but it is no answer to those who feel, justly, I think, that the German poet's work has been poorly dealt with. Englishmen's notions about "Faust" as a stage-play in German are apt to be a little vague; so clever a man as Mr. Gilbert, to judge from his preface to "Gretchen," seemed unaware that the drama was in its stage form a most telling piece; and Mr. Irving seems to have thought it out of the question to secure popularity for a play in English following the lines of the German acting versions. Popularity, as has been hinted, has certainly been secured and passed for the present to an unexampled degree for the curious hotch-potch presented as an adaptation of Goethe. It is, however, really "Mr. Irving and a panorama" that make the success; and certainly both acquit themselves admirably. As for Mr. Wills, it cannot be assumed that if he had dealt with the Faust legend, or with the Gretchen episode in Goethe's drama, after his own fashion, he would have succeeded where Mr. Gilbert failed. What he has done is to take, as it were, a witches' caldron and shred into it bits of the old legend, and of Goethe, and of Barbier and Carré, Gounod's librettists, and of Mr. Wills. So much, however, has been said in various quarters as to Mr. Wills's sins of commission and omission that it is scarcely necessary to dwell upon the structure or the wording of the piece. I may, however, briefly refer to one among many remarkable efforts in criticism which its production called forth. This is an article in the *Fortnightly Review* for January last, by Mr. W. L. Courtney (not to be confounded, as an English paper has confounded him, with Mr. Leonard Courtney). Mr. W. L. Courtney has made some remarkable discoveries,—that Mr. Wills's added scene in the garden belonging to the house of Gretchen's mother is an improvement on Goethe; that the cathedral scene, taken straight from Barbier and Carré, who here put Mephistopheles in the place of Goethe's Evil Spirit, is also not only an improvement but a novelty; that Mr. Irving's limp as Mephistopheles is an invention of Mr. Irving's; and that "there remains, however, the doubt whether Mephistopheles ought ever to be seen by the naked eye." On this amazing suggestion Mr. Courtney may well be left doubting.

The staging and acting of the Lyceum "Faust," apart from its writing, are full of varied interest. There is to me, as to many, a disappointment in the fact that Miss Ellen Terry has a part which does not show her undoubted genius to advantage. How much of her comparative failure is due to the character itself, and how much to the ill-written and inconsequent lines given to it by Mr. Wills,

cannot well be determined. The worst part of Miss Terry's acting is found in the earlier scenes, the better in the concluding ones, notably in some passages of the prison scene, where, however, she makes an odd mistake by leaning on the prison wall, and thus accentuating the fact that it is a back-cloth which quivers at her touch. Since the first production of the piece the part of Faust has changed hands. Mr. Conway seems to have made little of it on the first night. I saw him a few nights later, and thought he gave a fine, manly rendering of what in the Lyceum play is a poor transcript of Gounod's tenor with an incongruous touch from Goethe thrown in here and there. The part is, in fact, one for an actor who has, like Mr. Conway, a fine juvenile presence and has also, not like him, an indifference to thinking out a character as a whole,—a feat which with Mr. Wills's Faust is impossible. Mr. Alexander fills the part creditably and prettily on the lines just indicated. He had previously done better in the one scene for Valentine,—a scene so strong and simple that thinking on the actor's part is not wanted. Then his talent for interpreting with skill and force words which explain themselves stood him in good stead. The same scene is now played with equal effect, if with less refinement (which in the case of Valentine is not demanded), by Mr. Tyars. Mrs. Stirling plays Martha, and Mr. T. Mead appears as one of the weird figures in the Brocken scene. Both performances are in striking contrast to the efforts of more modern histrions who have never "been through the mill," and whose manifest deficiencies are fostered by the long-run system,—a system which, after all, has so completely deprived the young actor in England of any real chance of learning his business that he is less to blame for his shortcomings than one might think at first sight. Mrs. Stirling makes Martha needlessly old; but if she chose to make up the part as Judy her true and accomplished art would still command admiration. Miss L. Payne, an actress of singular merit, whose Maria in "Twelfth Night" was a model performance, has little to do, and does it very well, as the leader of the mocking girls who cote Margaret at the well.

But, as has been indicated, the interest of the acting centres in Mephistopheles; and here the actor's genius triumphs over the adapter's blunders. It had been so often said that Mephistopheles was *the* part for Mr. Irving that expectation might well have distanced performance. There is, however, no disappointment. The player has seized the complex nature which Mephistopheles must show to an audience,—the fiend answering Faust's summons in a spirit part obedience, part contempt, and part humorous anticipation; the fiend playing with the young scholar who comes to visit Faust, bored with his own assumption of a character, and repeating to the pupil with innate devilry the words, "*Eritis sicut Deus scientis bonum et malum*;" the fiend masquing as a gay, cynical cavalier; and the fiend revealing himself, when stirred to do so, in all his hellish majesty. Mr. Irving's true perception of the last-named phase exalts an extraordinarily inappropriate and bombastic speech of threat devised by Mr. Wills so that while he speaks the lines you forget their silliness in the power of his acting. So again in the scene containing the duel, where Mr. Irving's very artistic delivery of the serenade should not be passed over without high praise, the player's resources carry him capitably through the jerky lines provided for him; and yet again in the Brocken scene, which, picturesque and haunting as it is, is practically dumb show, the scarlet figure towering over the gray spectres and demons has a singular and diabolical dignity. Perhaps nothing in Mr. Irving's performance is better in itself than his giving of the three words "Hither to me,"

which ought to end the play. Unluckily, and very likely in prudent deference to a vitiated taste, these words are followed by a variation upon the operative apotheosis of Margaret, in which for once the mechanical part of the staging is at fault, inasmuch as the irons that support the angels are blatantly visible. This and other things of a like kind in the Lyceum "Faust" must the true lover of the drama deplore; but he will find very much to console him in Mr. Irving's Mephistopheles.

I HAVE neither inclination nor opportunity to discuss at length the question why Atlanta, Georgia, or Murfreesborough, Tennessee, fills more exactly than New York Mr. W. H. Babcock's ideal of a literary capital; but I can spare time to thank him for his interesting, entertaining, and instructive essay on "Song-Games and Myth-Dramas at Washington" in the March *Lippincott*. The abundant talk about the "Literary Centre of the United States"—I believe the phrase was first used by Mr. Stedman, in the *Galaxy*, nearly a score of years ago—is not a little like the inquiries concerning the coming of the Great American Novel which were very prevalent a quarter of a century ago, and which have ceased to trouble now that we have half a dozen novelists able to hold their own with the best that "the effete monarchies of despotic Europe" have to offer. These arid and interminable discussions are far less profitable and far less significant of our literary maturity than the recent awakening of interest in American folk-lore. "Uncle Remus," Mr. Newell, Dr. Brinton, and the Bureau of Ethnology have revealed to us that here in almost the newest country in the world there was no dearth of the traditional tales brought over in the original packet in the Mayflower, perhaps when she made her most famous voyage, and perhaps in some of her later and less-known passages, when she carried a cargo of that most valuable live-freight known as "Black Ivory." It is a curious proof of the tenacity of tradition and of the continuity of learning got by word of mouth that the songs of the little children in the streets of Edinburgh are not unlike those to be heard in the streets of New York, and that little voices are carolling variants of the same rhymes in San Francisco and in Melbourne. Mr. Babcock's contribution to our knowledge of the substantial identity and superficial modification of these children's song-games and primitive music-dramas is most welcome; and it seems to me that it is the duty of any one who can to supplement or amend the information thus placed on record as soon as possible. So I haste me forward with two very slight and unimportant notes,—if indeed any detail, however insignificant it may seem, is really unimportant in a study where so much depends on the collection and verification of an immense mass of trifling variations.

Mr. Babcock quotes,—

I lost my handkerchief Saturday night,
And found it Sunday morning.
Lost! Lost! Lost!

and tells us that in another form the chant is,—

Lucy Locket lost her pocket,
Katy Gray found it.
Lost! Lost! Lost!

Without a comparison of the tunes to which these words are sung, it is of course impossible to speak with certainty,—if indeed one may ever speak with certainty

about any question of folk-lore,—but I think the Lucy Locket lines are not another form of the Lost Handkerchief song, however much the two may now have commingled. The Lost Handkerchief game, with its refrain, is one thing, and the Lucy Locket song is another; and one may perhaps venture a suggestion that it was the recurrence of the word “lost” in the Lucy Locket song which led to the addition of the triple refrain

Lost! Lost! Lost!

and the adoption of the rhyme as a variety of the Handkerchief game. Mr. Babcock gives yet another variation:

Lady Locket lost her pocket,
Lady Fisher found it,
And every night she went to bed
And dreamt her cows were drowned.
Lost! Lost! Lost!

Here Mr. Babcock gets nearer to the original form of the stanza; for, as it happens, the origin of “Lucy Locket” is well known. It is contemporary with the “Beggar’s Opera,” which made Gay rich and Rich gay, and it is one quatrain of a song dashed off to record the facts of a quarrel between two young ladies of accommodating morals who took part in that enchanting Newgate pastoral. This quatrain is to the effect that

Lucy Locket lost her pocket,
Kitty Fisher found it.
There was not a penny in it,
But the binding round it.

Oddly enough, while the rest of the song is forgotten, while the fascinating and quarrelsome Lucy and Kitty have gone the way of all flesh, while the dust lies thick on Gay’s opera, seen now only on the shelves of a library and never on the boards of a theatre, this unpretending little quatrain has come down to us here in America. More oddly still, the tune to which it was sung is perhaps the best known of all the airs which the American boy whistles from Washington’s Birthday to the Fourth of July; for it is the tune to which we sing the rambling verses of “Yankee Doodle.” There is no doubt, I believe, that when the scoffing British were trying to fit the words of the scoffing ballad of “Yankee Doodle” to a tune, they ended by taking the air of “Lucy Locket.” The original words and music are preserved for the use of the carefully-tended denizens of English nurseries in Mr. Walter Crane’s “Baby’s Opera.” The American boy whistles the tune by instinct, apparently, but it is the same tune for all that.

The other note that I wish to tag to Mr. Babcock’s valuable paper is only a little counting-out rhyme. It is a variant of his

William T. Trinity
Was a good waterman.
He had hens
And kept them in pens.
Some laid eggs, and some laid none.
Whitefoot, specklefoot, trip and begone;

and it comes from no farther away from Washington than Petersburg, Virginia:

William, a trumpeter,
 He's a good fisherman,
 Catches his hens
 And puts them in pens.
 Some lay eggs
 And some lay none.
 Wire, brier, limber lock,
 Set and single, twelve o'clock.
 O, U, T, out,
 With your rotten dish-clout.

AFTER reading H. E. W.'s proposal for a "new society" in the March number of *Lippincott's*, I feel like responding, in scriptural paraphrase, "Thou dost not reason wisely concerning this."

No man likes in cold blood to write himself down a poet, any more than to declare himself a genius or a man of piety; and for the same reason. Yet, at the risk of seeming to arrogate to myself more than is due, I am moved to disclaim on behalf of some at least of the poetizing fraternity the distressingly helpless character which he puts upon us. Perhaps the loss of several hundred hard-earned dollars on two volumes of verse may entitle me to that amount of vain-glory and peacock-spreading. Probably he will consider this admission of financial loss a point in favor of his argument, and I am quite willing to let him have it so. But the point which I wish to make is that I do not yet feel any distressing need to be "preserved" (or pickled either) by "men of wealth" who take "satisfaction in connecting a poet with their establishment." If I thought myself "erratic, visionary, often irrational, without executive faculties, and too sensitive to endure," my first request would be to be put under a glass case and kept out of harm's way. If I were conscious of being "an unhappy man who conceals deep tortures," I should call in a first-class physician and take the worst prescription he could give me. Of course the ready answer is that I am not a poet. Granted, if you like; but I suppose H. E. W. will admit that Dr. Holmes is a poet, that Messrs. Longfellow, Lowell, Whittier, Whitman, Tennyson, Browning, Swinburne, and Matthew Arnold are or were poets. Does he seriously think that his definition or description will fit any one of them?

The fact is, he must go back to those much-belauded past ages of patronage to find any considerable number of such specimens. Here and there even yet some unhappy accident of physical constitution or some abnormal pressure of circumstances may produce such a picture as James Thompson living and dying in the City of Dreadful Night; but he stands almost alone among men of note in recent years. The Chattertons and Marlowes for the most part lie a long way behind us; and so too do the overdrinking poets, like Burns, and those whose egotistic or humanitarian excitement hurried them into untimely graves. Of late years most poets worthy of much consideration *have* been, at least to a moderate degree, business-men, men of executive abilities, men of horse sense. They live longer than any other class, and have a better time while they do live. They are not in the least danger of playing the dodo with us.

Where shall we locate this poetical golden age to whose hearse our society advocate would play chief mourner? Did begging Homer have any acquaintance with it? or snubbed and barely-tolerated Dante? Did Milton's verses enable him to roll in wealth? or Cowper's success give a silver lining to the cloud of that fancied unpardonable sin? One might run on with a long list, but that sort of

thing is unnecessary and unprofitable. The truth seems to be that there never was a better time than the present for the makers of "meritorious verse," excepting perhaps the early part of this century, when political ferments the world over had stimulated an excessive demand for everything emotional and common schools and newspapers had not yet made the supply vastly greater still. The enormous development of prose fiction and popular science must be credited, too, with drawing public attention powerfully from the poets. But all this is recent, and probably incident to a transitional period. What is best will endure. And I have no doubt at all that even at the present moment any very powerful and original poem would quickly meet with a degree of fame and success which ought to be reward enough, even if, as in the case of the "Leaves of Grass," there were inherent obstacles to its being bought by the general public.

In truth, the fault is more in the poets themselves than in the public. We do not get the powerful work; and why should they expect to win either reputation or money enough to live on out of merely meritorious verse, when so many can produce it? I think it was Goethe that Carlyle had in mind when he said in substance that for the life of him he could not see wherein poetic ability differed from any other kind of ability. My answer would be that it involves a certain nervous susceptibility also. But the susceptibility is not the main ingredient by any means. It never becomes so except in the lowest order of poets or those who are enfeebled by bad habits or disease. The great poets have shown again and again that they could be great in other lines as well. For example, take the monumental German just mentioned,—statesman, philosopher, scientist, novelist, *and* poet; or Milton toiling in the harness of responsible office and patriotically writing himself blind over controversial prose works. Dropping to lower levels, it is likely that Keble did as well in his see as another although he wrote "The Christian Year;" we are told that Emerson "kept one eye on 'Parnassus' and the other on 'Change;'" Thoreau made the best pencils going, could turn his hand to any one of half a dozen trades, and died "with nothing to regret;" and Dr. Weir Mitchell is not accounted a professional failure because of sweet, simple poetry like "The Quaker Burial-Ground." It may be a hard saying, but I am inclined to agree with the brutal individual who announced that "a man who can do nothing but write verses will never write any worth reading."

We are told, "The poet asks only that he may live by the exercise of the high faculties with which he is endowed,"—as poet, I suppose. Well, let him, if he can; and if he cannot, let him do what is much better,—live by the exercise of something else. Would it be well for any man to keep grinding away on verses constantly? I think not. Irritability becomes more irritable by irritation,—if I may put a word through its paces for the sake of emphasis. Nervous susceptibility is the rarest of servants, but a terrible master. It may be that many a man is kept out of a wretched condition by being compelled to grapple with the practical side of life. An excellent partial substitute may be found in Wordsworthian or Tennysonian rambles, for Ben Jonson was quite right when he said that nature was "the poet's matter;" but men need to be brought into contact—even painful contact, if you will—with their fellow-men also.